

ISTITUTO ITALIANO PER L'AFRICA E L'ORIENTE
CENTRO SCAVI E RICERCHE ARCHEOLOGICHE
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI NAPOLI "L'ORIENTALE"
DIPARTIMENTO DI STUDI ASIATICI

GIOVANNI VERARDI
and
ELIO PAPARATTI

BUDDHIST CAVES OF JĀGHŪRĪ AND QARABĀGH-E GHAZNĪ, AFGHANISTAN

With an Appendix
by M. S. R. INABA



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FOREWORD

In 1973 I was preparing a short note on a sculpted half-pillar conserved in the storehouse of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Ghaznī, which had been found in the *vālesvelāyat* of Qarabāgh, west of Ghaznī (Verardi 1975). For this reason, I was seeking information on that region with the help of the Mission foreman, Mr Ghulam Naqshband Rajabi, who informed me the following year of the actual existence of some ancient monuments there.

I went to Qarabāgh in autumn 1974, accompanied by Ghulam Naqshband, and discovered the cave group of Homāy Qal'a, situated near the road from Qarabāgh to Jāghūrī after crossing the pass of Zardālū. I reported this discovery at the Conference of South Asian Archaeology held in Paris in 1975 (Verardi 1979), after publishing a short note in *East and West* (Taddei & Verardi 1974). I had not seen, and I was not to see for several years to come, the article published in 1971 by A.D.H. Bivar, who had followed the same route in the 1960s and had reported the existence of Buddhist monasteries in the region. In autumn 1975 I was able to make two visits to the Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī districts. On the first occasion I visited the site of Nāy Qal'a in the district of Qarabāgh, one of the largest caves groups of the region, of which I had heard during my first visit the year before, and those of Tapa Sanawbar, near the Bāzār-e Lūmān, Sangdara and Tapa Hesār in the *vālesvelāyat* of Jāghūrī, lying immediately west of the *vālesvelāyat* of Qarabāgh. On the second occasion I was accompanied by Maurizio Taddei, Director of the Italian Mission, Nicola Labianca, draftsman, Manlio Valentini, and Fazlur Rahman Mujaddidi of the Afghan Institute of Archaeology. Mr Nicola Labianca made the drawings of a few caves at Nāy Qal'a, and of some others at Homāy Qal'a, which I visited once again.

The following year, in September 1976, I paid a longer visit to Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī accompanied by Umberto Scerrato, Elio Paparatti, draftsman and restorer, Giuseppe De Marco, a student at the Università degli Studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (¹), Daud Kawayan of the Afghan Institute of Archaeology, and, once again, Ghulam Naqshband. This time I proceeded farther north towards the lake of Nāwor, coming across other Buddhist cave complexes, the largest of which is Tapa

Zaytūn in the Nāwa-ye Ūlyātū. I visited Tapa Sanawbar for the second time, and I paid a further visit to Nāy Qal'a. I first gave brief notice of the new sites discovered in *East and West* (Verardi 1976), and later on wrote a short article on the main cave of Tapa Sanawbar (Verardi 1981). Further information on the sites visited was given in Taddei & Verardi (1984: 66-68; 1985: 292-300).

During the 1976 survey I came to hear of the existence of other cave groups, including those of Shāhrzāyda, Chupan Qōl, Sōkhta and Tana Ghār in the Dasht-e Dehbaday, and that of Kaftar Khāna, 4 or 5 km west of the southernmost tip of the lake of Nāwor. I was not able to visit them because of the limited time at my disposal, nor could I arrange any visit the following year. In 1978 events were coming to a head in Afghanistan, and any further survey of the region became impossible. My plans would have included a tour south of Jāghūrī town following the Arghandāb downstream, as well as a tour to the Dasht-e Nāwor. A visit to the mountains south of the Zardālū Pass, where the river Tarnak has its source, and to the Mālestān-Nāwor road had also been scheduled. More complete, if not exhaustive, documentation of the sites already visited was also planned, although the excavation work at Tapa Sardār did not allow much time for surveying, and even less possibility was there for a full team to be engaged on long, difficult work in a remote area.

As time went by, other commitments prevented me even from making known the still unpublished material. In 2000, after the untimely death of Maurizio Taddei, I thought it my duty to take up the documentation of the work carried out by the Italian Archaeological Mission in the 1970s once again. The most important legacy is Tapa Sardār, but its final publication will take time, only a few additional considerations being possible at present. Conversely, publication of the extant documentation on the Buddhist cave groups appeared to me more feasible. Therefore, I asked Mr Elio Paparatti to resume a task that had been interrupted more than twenty years before, and he readily acceded.

(¹) Then the Istituto Universitario Orientale.

Early in 2001 we collected our notes and all the photographic and graphic documentation. We realized that there was much that could be said in addition to what had already been published, and that some mistakes in the preliminary publications should be corrected. The events that took place in Afghanistan shortly after, when the Bāmiyān Buddhas and Tapa Sardār were destroyed⁽²⁾ and other relics of the pre-Muslim past ruthlessly smashed by the Talibāns, further convinced us of the urgency of producing any evidence contributing to obtain a better knowledge of Afghanistan's ancient history.

In view of this, I planned a sojourn at the Institute for Research in Humanities in Kyoto, where ample documentation on Afghanistan, and especially on the Buddhist cave architecture is conserved, thanks to the past activity of the Kyoto University Archaeological Mission to the Iranian Plateau and Hindukush⁽¹⁾ directed by Seiichi Mizuno and the Kyoto University Archaeological Mission to Central Asia directed by Takayasu Higuchi. I spent the month of March 2002 in Kyoto on the strength of a grant from the Japan Foundation for the Promotion of Science. In Kyoto I was able to discuss a number of questions with my colleague Shoshin Kuwayama, who devoted much of his research work to perusing the Chinese sources on Bāmiyān, Kāpīśī, Kābul, Zābul and Gandhāra, after the interruption of fieldwork in 1977. During my stay, he was busy correcting the proofs of his *Across the Hindukush of the First Millennium* (Kuwayama 2002), in which his major contributions on the subject are collected. I was also able to discuss several questions with Minoru Inaba, whose knowledge of the early Muslim sources on the regions to

the south of the Hindukush proved invaluable for the discussion. I eventually asked him to write a part of the text, which is published as an Appendix.

I am also indebted to my colleague Silvio Vita for translating for me a chapter of the Japanese translation and commentary of Huichao's *Wang Wu — Tianzhuguo Zhuan/Records of Travels in Five Indic Regions* (Kuwayama 1998), and to Aurora Testa for translating Kuwayama's notes to his translation into Japanese of Xuanzang's chapters on Afghanistan and northwestern India (Kuwayama 1987). Thanks are also due to Natalia Tornesello for checking the names transliterated from Persian and Arabic and to Chiara Visconti for the assistance given in the final phases of the book.

I had the opportunity to go back to Afghanistan at the end of 2001 and then in 2002, when the Italian Archaeological Mission was able to resume its activity in Kābul and Ghaznī, and again in 2003. No work could be carried out in the districts of Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī, but I hope that exploration will be resumed in the near future.

Giovanni Verardi

⁽²⁾ One week after the destruction of the Bāmiyān Buddhas, the Ghaznī Talibāns went to Tapa Sardār and smashed the images and the *stūpas* which were still preserved *in situ*, despite the damages suffered during the civil war period. Since Tapa Shotor, excavated by the Afghan Institute of Archaeology in the 1960s and 1970s had been destroyed many years before, Tapa Sardār had remained the only site with Buddhist icons visible in the whole of Afghanistan.

⁽¹⁾ The name of the Mission in Japanese actually was 'Kyoto University Research Mission to Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan'.

TRANSLITERATIONS AND TRANSCRIPTIONS

The major problem regards the transliterations from Dari, especially those of place names. We followed a very simplified system, marking only long vowels. This simplification also applies, and to a larger extent, to Pashto place names, although only a few appear in the text.

It should be noted that several place names are given different transliterations in maps and atlases. We consulted, in particular, *Da Afghānistān Jughrāfiyā'i Qāmās* (Afghānistān Akādīmī, *Da Āryānā dā'irat ul-ma'ārif*), 6 vols., Kābul 1340/1962-1350/1972. There is much uncertainty even regarding place names which are comparatively well known. In the Dorling Kindersley World Atlas (London 1999), just to recall a recent and widely circulated atlas, we find Ūrūzgān (with the variants Oruzgān, Orūzgān, Urūzgān) as the name of a town, and Urūzgān (variant Orūzgān) as the name of a province of

Central Afghanistan. These discrepancies do not depend on the inconsistency of the transliteration system, but on discrepancies in the records written in Latin alphabet, when indeed there are any, and on the field informants. In this case, we employed the Ūrūzgān form, both for the province and the town. The transliterations we made on the field with the help of local informants and of the Afghan officials accompanying us do not always correspond to those found in atlases and maps: with a few exceptions we retained the names as gathered at the time of our visit.

The transliteration of Arabic names follows an analogous system, and only long vowels are marked.

Sanskrit names have been transliterated according to the generally accepted system, and Chinese names are given in the *pinyin* transcription, without citing the original characters.

MAPS

Fig. 1 is a free adaptation of the 1:2.000.000 map of Pakistan and Afghanistan published by Mairs Geographischer Verlag, Ostfildern.

Fig. 2 is based on Provincial maps sheet no. PI42-10, scale 1:425.000, distributed by AIMS (Afghanistan Information Management Service), United Nations Organization, Kābul.

Figs. 5, 28, 57, 73 are details of Sheet 2583 (Lūmān)

of the 1:100.000 map of Afghanistan drawn up by the U.S. Army Topographic Command, Washington, D.C., which is based on the map compiled in 1969 by the Ministry of Mines, Fairchild Aerial Surveys, Sheets 514D and 514F, 1967. The map is not field checked, but its reliability is good. Thanks are due to the Embassy of Italy, Kābul, for procuring it. Fig. 3 was processed from this map.

1. THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The region where the Buddhist caves described in this report are situated corresponds to the northwestern portion of the *vālesvelāyat* of Qarabāgh and the north-eastern portion of the *vālesvelāyat* of Jāghūrī in the *velāyat* of Ghaznī (Figs. 1-3). The area visited is limited to the south by the segment of the Jāghūrī-Qarabāgh road between Ghūjūr, to the northeast of Jāghūrī, and Bāzār-e Zardālū, 43.9 km west of the turning for Qarabāgh on the Ghaznī-Moqor highway. To the north, it is limited by the impressive massifs barring the lake of Nāwor to the south.

Two of these massifs, the Kōh-e Rās, reaching 3903 m, and Mount Dehbaday, 3751 m high, form the divide between the uppermost valley of the Arghandāb river, which receives several tributaries near the source and runs directly southwest, and the Daryā-ye Ghaznī system, which also receives a few tributaries from the mountains to the east and south of the Lake of Nāwor. The Daryā-ye Ghaznī, which flows into the lake of Āb-e Ēstāda south of Moqor, originates north of Ghaznī. A few typical formations can be noted in the area, such as the flat Kōh-e Gawāra to the southeast of Mount Dehbaday and the isolated peak of the Kōh-e Khūd (Pls. LXXVIII, LXXVI, LXXIX.a), rising to 3518 m between the uppermost valley of the Arghandāb proper and the Tayna Tangī and the Nāwa-ye-Khodāyād. The Kōh-e Khūd is a landmark clearly visible from afar in all directions.

From the massif south of the Zardālū pass, not far from the village of Chūb Maskha, originates the Tarnak river, which flows southeast for a short stretch before running parallel to the Arghandāb in a southwestern direction. We did not visit this area, which lies to the south of the Ghūjūr-Bāzār-e Zardālū road.

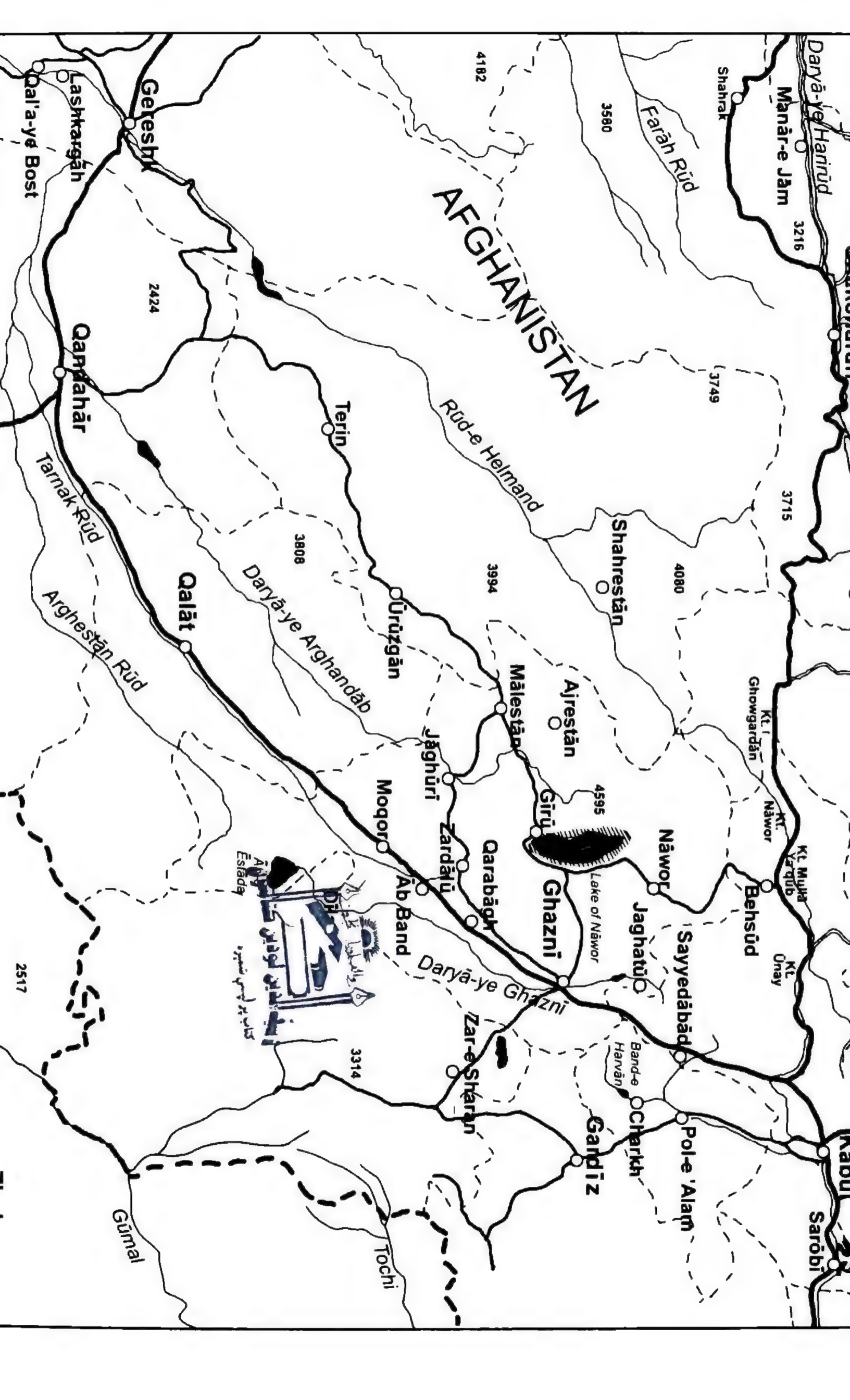
The long, narrow upper valleys of the tributaries of the Daryā-ye Ghaznī and the Arghandāb are wedged into the massifs which they have eroded, and reach very close to the southern shore of lake Nāwor, thus being the natural passageways for travellers coming from downstream who need to cross. Some of the *daryā* and *rūd* (rivers), *tangāy* and *tangī* (river gorges) have little or no water during the summer, but can turn into large water courses, as even the hastiest observation of the geomorphologic aspects of the area will show. *Dara*

(valleys) and *nāwa* (areas made fertile by the presence of water) can be suddenly flooded, too.

The region can be reached from the far southwest following the courses of the Arghandāb and the Tarnak. In 1976, we met a caravan of nomads of the Sinuar (probably Sehnāwar; cf. Adamec 1980: 418) tribe along the river Jelgad (where the Nāy Qal'a massif rises) to the west of Mount Dehbaday, and therefore in the Daryā-ye Ghaznī system, on their way to Qandahār. Access from the region of Āb-e Ēstāda (and, further afar, from the Zhōb valley in Baluchistān and Panjāb) is possible following upstream the Daryā-ye Ghaznī and its tributaries after crossing the Toba Kākar Range.

The region is little known, and we lack geological and geomorphological description of it. The volcano-tectonic depression which constitutes the Dasht-e Nāwor to the north has been the object of a study by Bordet (1972), and the nearest area fully surveyed lies northeast of the lake (Fesefeldt 1964). The great diversity of the geological landscape within even a limited area advises against any generalization. However, the presence of an igneous rock substratum of the Tertiary Age, together with rocks of the Paleozoic Age and sedimentary formations of the Paleogenic Age is probable in the area under study: an undifferentiated Paleozoic basement is followed by relatively recent (5.2-65 millions of years) igneous rocks.

In the area between Ghaznī and the Provinces of Paktyā and Paktikā, coarse arenaceous formations are present, known as Shāhīqalū Shales. They are severely disjointed, with consequent general instability and collapsed blocks of rock, and characterized by a ridge and valley geomorphology. There are also limestone intercalations in between the arenaceous layers, whose karstic dissolution has led to the formation of a number of caves. Caves may also be formed in the arenaceous formations through selective erosion: the roof usually runs along the harder layers, while a cavity results from erosion of the softer ones. Many artificial caves are known to us in the area, probably created by enlarging small natural cavities — not a particularly daunting task given the weakness of the rock. This description may apply, at least to some extent, to the Jāghūrī-Qarabāgh area, although the existence of a fault separating the



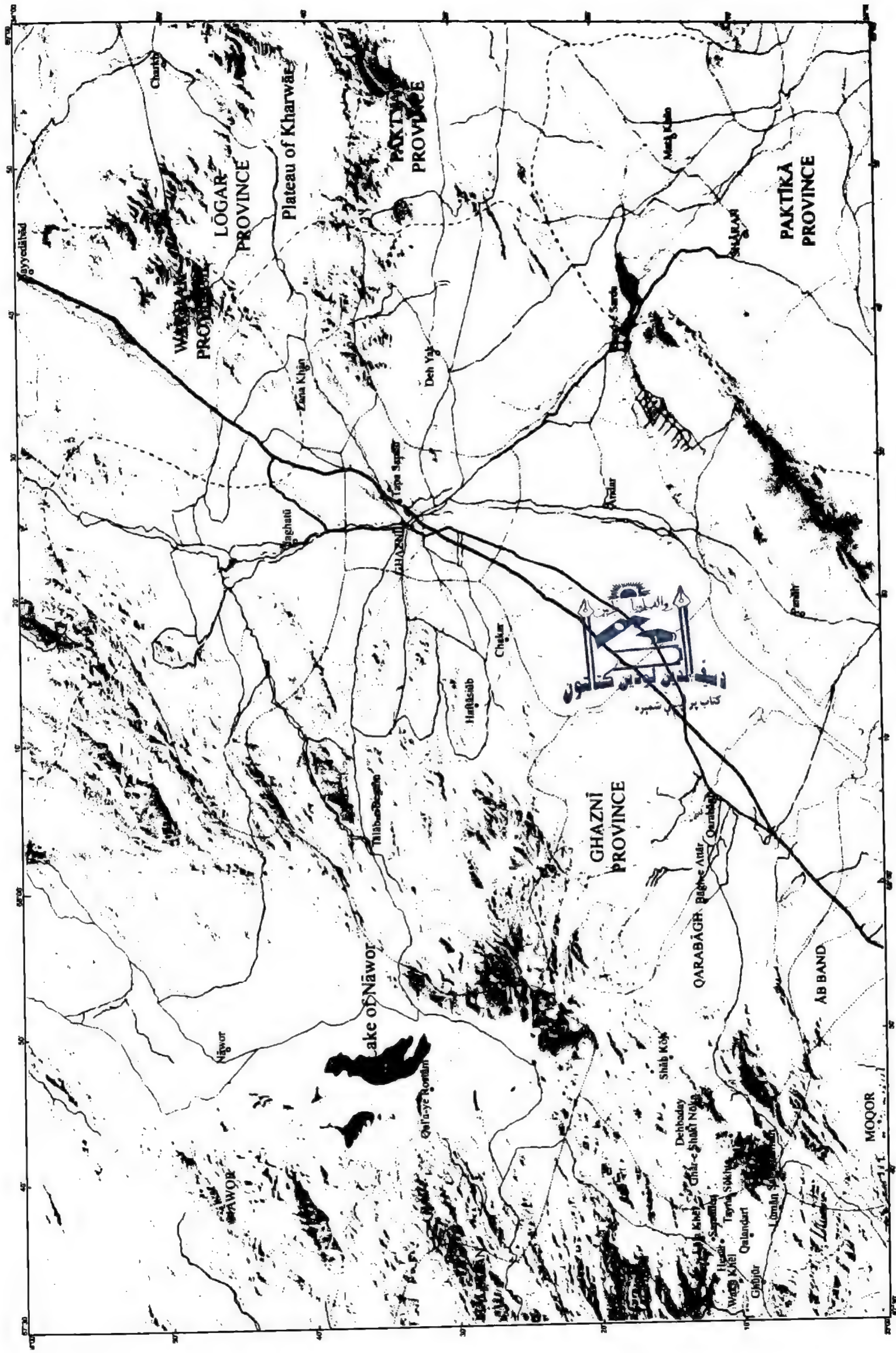


Fig. 2. Map of Northern part of Ghazni province.

region under review from the other to the east indicates that the rock series may not coincide on its two sides. Arenaceous formations actually characterize the landscape to the north of the above-cited Zardālū-Ghūjūr road segment, and the Buddhist caves were excavated there.

Some cave groups such as Nāy Qal'a, Gawargīn, Kōh-e Ēl and Bayak have smooth, sharp-edged vertical rock walls, tens of metres high (Pls. III, XLIV, L, LXXVII.a, b). These walls probably originated with the collapse of rocks along fracture surfaces, typical of arenaceous lithologies. Linear ledges and elliptical cavities on the walls, aligned on the rock stratification, can readily be observed, for instance, at Homāy Qal'a (Pl. XX). These may well have been limestone intercalations and inclusions in the arenaceous series, dissolved by karstic erosion. In the Nāy Qal'a massif (Pl. IV.b) we observe some blocks of rock with a rough surface and clasts within — probably cemented breccia or a coarse clastic rock. At Lālā Khēl, west of the Kōh-e Khūd (Pl. LXXIX.b) there is a differentiated morphology, with alternate lithologies, each of them with its own degree of erosion. The arenaceous formations are on the cliffs, and shales on the slopes. At Shāh Khwāja (Pl. XXXVII.b), in the Nāwa-ye Khodāyād, the arched and curved morphology of the roof rock layer seen in some caves is typical of arenaceous formations; in some cases the sedimentary structures can be seen since the vault appears flaked. There may also be pebbles in the sandstone given the coarseness of the rock.

The exact erosion model cannot be exactly determined without specific survey. It could have originated either by wind (typical of the local present-day climate), with a chemical reaction due to certain kinds of salts in aeolic dusts, or by a succession of various agents, first karstic and running waters, then actual wind erosion. In the latter case, the running water erosion would be of quite early occurrence, dating back to an age preceding the actual semi-desertic conditions of climate. The erosion reached such a degree in certain cases that the sandstone formations where the caves were excavated have since been almost obliterated, as for instance at Sangdara (Pl. LXIII.a, b)^(*).

The climate is severe. On the morning of 16 September 1976 the temperature fell below 0° at Bāzār-e Ūlyātū, north of Ghūjūr, at a height of approximately 2700 m. Snow, spring rains and floods make the region impracticable for several months during the year.

A few words must be devoted to the Dasht-e Nāwor and its route connections (Fig. 1). According to Gérard Fussman, who visited the place in 1969, four passes afford access to the *dasht*: from Mālestān to the southwest; from the valley of the Sar-e Āb and Ghaznī, by far the easiest access; from the high Lōgar valley to the northeast; and from the Khawāt Valley and the valley of Wardak — an impracticable route — to the north (Fussman 1974a: 4). It is clear, however, that access is

also possible from the south through the passes which can be reached following the rivulets of the uppermost Arghandāb and Tarnak valleys, and the westernmost tributaries of the Daryā-ye Ghaznī west of Mount Dehbaday. Another way is to proceed from Nāwor to Bāmiyān following the upper Khāja valley upstream, and proceeding to Bēhsūd and the upper valley of the Helmand. This is, in fact, the route followed by the caravans to and from Qandahār.

The existence of this or a similar route is mentioned by Raverty (1995: 95), and is alluded to in the *Tārīkh-e Sīstān*, where it is said that Ya'qūb b. Laith, after defeating the last ruler of Zābul (who was barricaded in the fortress of Nāy Qal'a), 'left for Balkh, by way of Bāmiyān' (Gold 1976: 172). According to Maqdisī's *Kitāb ahsan al-taqāsīm fī ma'rīfat al-aqālīm*, one of the gates of Ghaznī at the time of Sabuktigīn (second half of the 10th century), was known as Bāb al-Bāmiyān (cf. Rehman 1979: 9), and in fact there was a road leading from Ghaznī to Bāmiyān via Rabāt-al-Bārad, Asnākh and Hans (*ibid.*: 24, on the authority of Maqdisī). Ibn Hawqal tells us in his *Kitāb al-masālik wa al-mamālik* that the distance between Ghaznī and Bāmiyān was 8 *marhala* (*ibid.*)^(*).

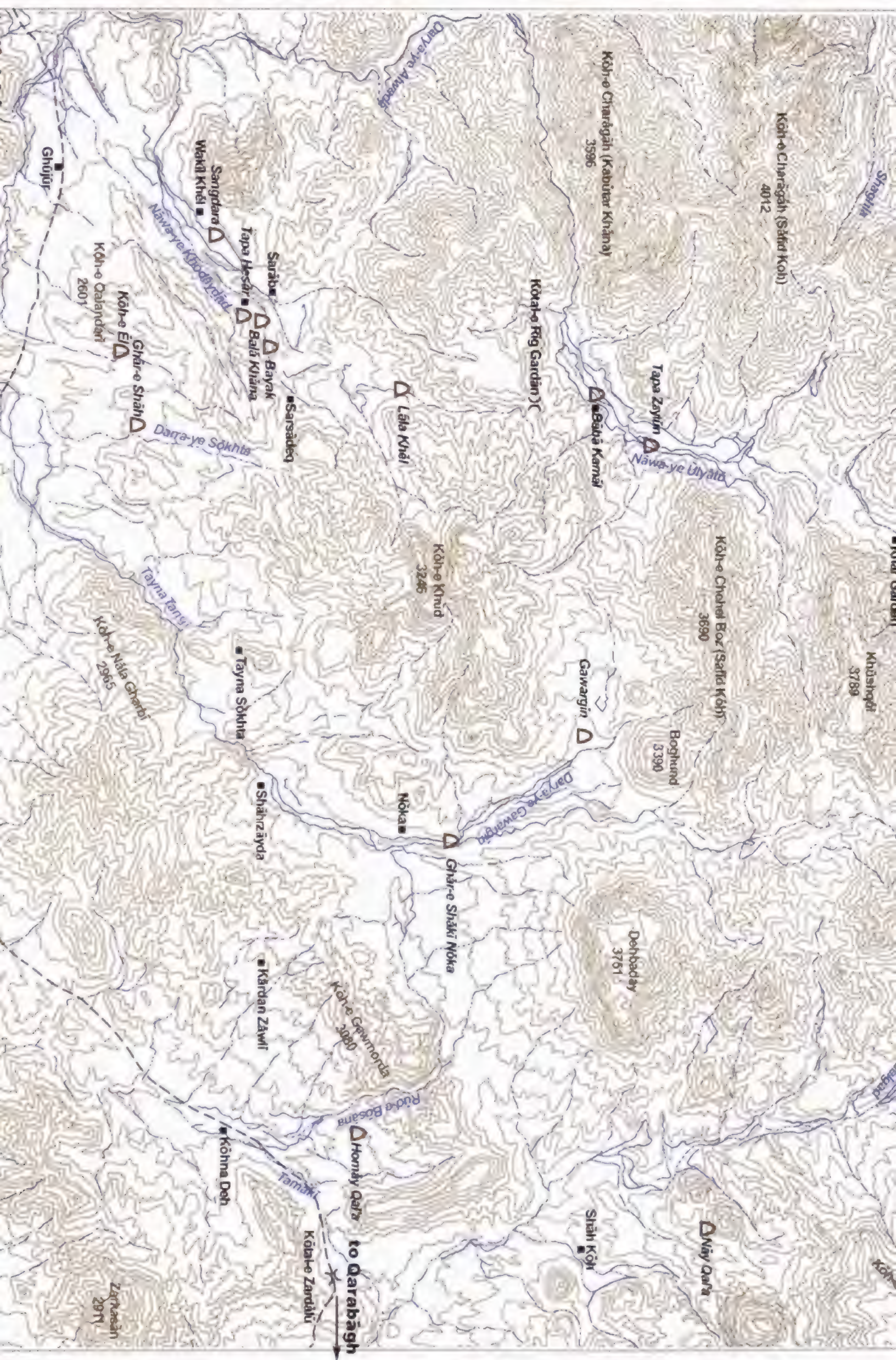
The information provided by the Chinese sources also gives the impression that in Buddhist times there was a route to the west of Kābul connecting the kingdoms of Zābul and Fulishisantangna (which probably included the territories under review; cf. below and Appendix) with Bāmiyān. Huichao, a Korean pilgrim who visited Zābulistān in 727, expressly states that from Zābul, i.e. Ghaznī, to Bāmiyān took a seven-day march proceeding northwards. Since he had reached Zābul from Jibin, or Kāpīśī/Kābul (Yang et al. 1984: 51), he must have followed a route crossing the Hindukush from south to north.

The recent discovery of a Bactrian inscription at Tang-e Safedak in central Hindukush, 100 km west of Bāmiyān, recording the establishment of a *stūpa* by the ruler of Ghaznī in A.D. 724 (Lee & Sims-Williams 2003: 163 ff.) clarifies the issue once and for all. The northern border of Zābulistān was beyond the river Helmand in that period, and the road from Ghaznī to the northern provinces of the kingdom could only follow the valley of Sar-e Āb and restart from Nāwor. For those travelling from the south and southwest, the lake could be reached through the upper valleys of the Tarnak and Arghandāb.

Lastly, from this region it is also possible to reach Ghūr and Herāt eschewing the more usual routes (Raverty 1995: 94 and n. 15 on p. 142, 95).

(*) Thanks are due to Giulio Di Anastasio, who examined the documentation at our disposal and allowed us to give a more complete description of the region, especially with regard to the geomorphological aspects. He also made a thorough research in the Internet for additional information.

(*) On the Ghaznī-Bāmiyān road, cf also Marquart (1901: 257, n. 2; 1915: 271).



2. THE CAVES

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The Jāghūrī and Qarabāgh groups of caves not only belong to one and the same geographical environment but also share common characteristics in terms of typologies and the techniques employed to excavate them. The features they have in common are discussed in a separate chapter for the reader's convenience, and to avoid repetitions in the descriptive chapter.

As pointed out above, the walls of the rock formations into which the caves were hewn out have partly collapsed. Frost split the rock along the clefts, rain and snow opened fissures, and the combined action of earthquakes led to further collapse of walls already weakened by the excavation work. Consequently, huge blocks of rock and piles of debris often encumber the entrance to the caves, as well as the inner rooms and corridors, which are often inaccessible.

The cave front as we see it now does not in general correspond to the original front of the rock-cut monasteries; today the mountain walls look as if cross-sectioned by falls of rock. Where the original front is preserved, the openings are generally warped by either the action of the natural elements or re-working activity carried out by later dwellers when the monastic period had come to an end. These have probably always been the poorest among the local people, unable even to afford houses in unfired brick, living in the caves with their cattle over the centuries. At Nāy Qal'a, however, we have an example of a cave preserving the original façade (Cave 2, Pl. VI.b), and at Tapa Zaytūn the outline of a large niche is intact (Pl. LXXXVIII.b).

The caves follow different typologies, while some are unique in plan and decoration. Such is the case of Cave 9 at Nāy Qal'a, a large sanctuary formed by a rectangular room with a sanctum accessed by a flight of steps (Figs. 14-16) and Cave 2 at Tapa Sanawbar, which originally had an entablature decorated with a *boukephalia* and garlands motif (Figs. 32-33; Pl. XXXIII). Pillared halls clearly inspired by Indian prototypes, like Cave 3 at Sangdara and Cave 5 at Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl (Figs. 64-65 and 79; Pls. LXVI.a and LXXXIV.c) are also typical of this region and unknown in the other rock-cut sanctuaries of Afghanistan.

The commonest caves are rectangular in plan, and covered either by a flat or slightly cambered ceiling or by a barrel vault with parabolic cross-section, a Sasanian feature (*SPA*, II: 499-500)(⁶), sometimes flattened on top. Caves 242, 467 and 732 at Bāmiyān are examples, among others, of flat-roofed, rectangular chambers with a large niche on the back wall (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pls. 84.2, 116.4, 170.4; cf. here Pl. CVII.a); Caves 37 and 200 (*ibid.*: pls. 18.2, 75.2; cf. here Pl. CV.a) show a parabolic cross-section, while the barrel vault of Cave 104 is, by contrast, much flattened (*ibid.*: pl. 36.4). It would be pedantic to recall examples of parabolic-vaulted caves from Xinjiang — they are indeed quite common — and we shall limit reference here to the 'Grosse Höhle' at Mingoī near Qizil (Pl. CXV.c). This architectural feature is also known from the late-phase *viḥāras* at Tapa Sardār (Taddei & Verardi 1978: 44) and at Kara Tepe in Transoxiana (in Complex B, cf. Staviskij 1972: 16 ff.; 1975: 30 ff.; cf. here Pls. CXIV.a, b)(⁷).

When one or more niches, usually parabolic-vaulted, are present in the back wall and along the sidewalls, the caves are to be interpreted as chapels. The niches, usually quite large, are often flanked by smaller ones to hold lamps (cf. Cave 10 at Nāy Qal'a, Cave 6 at Kōh-e Ēl, etc.; Figs. 17-18, 49-50; Pl. XIII), and Cave 18 at Kakrak, in the Bāmiyān area, can be mentioned (Higuchi 1983-84, IV: plan 30) as well as the caves in Complex B at Kara Tepe (Pls. CXIV.a, b). In certain cases, the whole arch of the niche or its upper segment is doubled by a band, either in relief or in chase, which is, or should have been, decorated by a geometrical design. Cave 2 at Sangdara (Fig. 63; Pl. LXIV.b) exemplifies the embedded arched lintel and the type of decoration that might adorn it, Cave 12 at Nāy Qal'a (Fig. 20) the arched lintel in relief. These decorative bands are not so common at Bāmiyān, but a few examples are to be found: see Cave 330 (Pl. CVI.a).

(⁶) The question of this and other Sasanian loans has been discussed by several scholars, including Le Berre (1987: 91-97) and Higuchi (1983-84, III: 161-62), and we refer the reader to them.

(⁷) The Kara Tepe monastery, partly carved out in the rock, was dated by Staviskij to the Kušāna period, but a 6th or 7th-century date is more likely from what we now know of the history of Tokharistān and the Hindukush regions. Cf. below.

While no trilobate or trapezoidal niches of the kind known from Bāmiyān and Tapa Sardār^(*) seem to exist, pointed arches are documented at Nāy Qal'a (Cave 8; Fig. 13; Pl. VIII.b). This feature is an adaptation of the *caitya* arch, and is extremely common, from Wardak (Fussman 1974b: 108-9) to Bāmiyān (cf. Caves 119, 605, 738 in Higuchi 1983-84, III: p. 29, fig. 23, p. 64, fig. 57, p. 70, fig. 64; II: pls. 142.2, 143.3. Cf. here Pl. CVIII.c and in Sasanian architecture as well [Pl. CXV.b]). At Nāy Qal'a it is obtained by superimposing a triangle on top of the arch, so that a summary *caitya*-arch effect was obtained by plastering.

Along the sidewalls of some parabolic-vaulted caves, such as Cave 1 at Tapa Sanawbar (Fig. 30; Pls. XXXI-XXXII) and Cave 2 at Sangdara (Fig. 63, Pl. LXIV.c), a projecting cornice formed by double indentation narrows the span to be covered. This is another, typical feature of Sasanian architecture. In free-standing buildings, the walls are made gradually shifting inwards, and the span to be covered is further narrowed by not aligning the first row of bricks of the barrel vault with the walls below, making them jut out. In the Buddhist architecture of Afghanistan, similar examples are again found in Bāmiyān (Caves 13, 330, 406; here Pls. CV.b-CVI.b).

The enormous, unfinished rectangular caves of Tapa Zaytūn (Fig. 80), decorated with gigantic parabolic niches, form a group of their own, finding few comparisons elsewhere. We may recall Caves 19, 53 and 62 at Kakrak, long and barrel-vaulted (Higuchi 1983-84, IV: plans 31, 36, 38), which were probably also left unfinished, and Caves 23 and 25 at Fōlādī (Pl. CX). It may be that two rows of niches had been planned along the main sidewalls at Kakrak. Closer comparison can probably be seen in the dozen caves in the E area at Basāwal (here Pl. CXI), poorly preserved and clearly unfinished, as witnessed by the irregular presence of niches along the sidewalls^(*). The very disposition of the long, rectangular caves on one and the same terrace is also strongly reminiscent of Tapa Zaytūn. Another comparison can be made with Cave 2 at Haybāk. It was not originally made of two long parallel corridors divided by a wall with openings, but had been originally planned as a chapel with niches along the sidewalls (see the *Excursus* on Haybāk below).

Square chambers covered by domes on squinches are common in Bāmiyān (Caves 48, 58, 222 and several others; cf. Higuchi 1983-84, III: p. 20, fig. 10, p. 22, fig. 12, p. 46, fig. 47, etc.), and are actually well documented in the free-standing architecture of central Hindukush (cf. Le Berre 1987: room H of ruin 8 at Qafīr Qal'a of Ghandak, pls. 25c, 26a; room K of Ruin 15 at Doāb-e Mikh-e Zarīn, pl. 33; ruin 17, pl. 35d; room 7 of Ruin 28 at Sepahāsta; ruin 1 at Dara-ye Shombol, pl. 43b; etc.), and south of the mountains as well, as for example at Gul Dara (Fussman & Le Berre 1976: 50, pl. 28), Tapa Sardār (Taddei 1986) and Qafīr Kōt in Kharwār (Pl. CXIII), to take a few examples. Cave 3 at Haybāk may also be mentioned (cf. Mizuno 1962: pls. 14-18). This architecture also follows Sasanian models, too well

known to be dwelt upon here. The presence in Jāghūrī and Qarabāgh of similar domed chambers is uncertain. Cave 2 at Tapa Sanawbar (Fig. 31) might be an example of this kind, but there can be no certainty given its poor state of preservation^(**).

In some cases, a simplified form of this architecture can be seen in Buddhist buildings. The domes may, in fact, rise on corbelled corner slabs. Caves 12, 24, 41, 383, 585 and 627 at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pls. 4.4, 7, 21.1, 99.1, 136.3, 163; cf. here Pl. CIV.a, b) and Cave C' at Fōlādī (Dagens, Le Berre & Schlumberger 1964: 45, fig. 3) stand out in this respect. The dome covering Cave A at Tapa Zaytūn (Fig. 100; Pl. XCLIII.c) is exactly of this type, and is reminiscent of late Gandharan *vihāras* such as those of Taṛelī (Pl. CXV.a), aptly referred to by Higuchi (1984, III: 159) in connection with Bāmiyān.

An indentation similar to that observed in rectangular caves is often found in square chambers as well. It creates a constriction between the square chamber and the dome, but does not always serve the purpose of narrowing the span to be covered. Cave 2 at Tapa Sanawbar is an example of this (Figs. 31, 33), remaining of Cave 51 at Bāmiyān (Pl. CIV.c). In the case of Tapa Sanawbar Cave 1, however, the double string course marks the narrowing of the vault (Fig. 30), as in Caves 5 and 385 at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, III: p. 51, fig. 50, p. 142, fig. 80; see here Pl. CIV.d).

No caves covered with the so-called *Laternendecke* are documented in the region. This may depend on the incompleteness of the survey, but the fact that the other types of monumental caves do exist may indicate that this architectural feature is actually absent. Nor have any caves trapezoidal in section as Cave 738 at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pl. 173) been observed, although Cave 1 at Hesār (Fig. 68) may have drawn inspiration from an example as Cave 140 at Bāmiyān (Pl. CVII.b).

In the cave groups of Jāghūrī and Qarabāgh, the rectangular, generally flat-roofed rooms without large niches such as Cave 10a at Nāy Qal'a (Fig. 10) and Cave 1 at Ghār-e Shāh (Fig. 53), are probably to be interpreted as monks' dwellings. Very peculiar is the group of cells at Tapa Zaytūn (Fig. 97; Pl. XCIII), arranged in three superimposed rows, each with a separate entrance. They closely resemble the 'meditation grottoes' in the northern group at Mogao, Dunhuang (Pl. CXVI.c).

Whatever the function of the cave, the original doors are always rectangular, and show the slots for the

(*) See, in Bāmiyān, the trilobate niches of Caves 70 and 160, and the trapezoidal ones in caves 167 and 629 among others (Higuchi, II: pls. 26-27; III: 24, fig. 15, 164, fig. 37; II, pls. 62-63, 164.2). For Tapa Sardar, see the decoration of *vihāra* 17 (Taddei & Verardi 1978: 88-92).

(**) Cave 130, the only one square in plan, is certainly finished, as is shown by its paintings.

(***) According to Bivar, who visited the place in 1962, a large cave turned into a home at Tapa Sanawbar was provided with squinches (Bivar 1971: 86; cf. below).

wooden lintels on which the door leaves were fixed (see e.g. the doors to Caves 1-3 from the once existing outer balcony at Ghār-e Shāh and Cave 8 at Nāy Qal'a; Figs. 56, 16; Pls. IX.b, X.a). This is a feature frequently observed at Bāmiyān, as for instance in Caves 200, 201, 483 (*ibid.*, II: pls. 73, 120.5; see here Pl. CVII.c), and as far as Qizil in Xinjiang (in Cave 15; cf. *Xinjiang Kezier Shiku* 1997: 206, fig. 90).

The caves of Jāghūrī and Qarabāgh were often hewn out at various levels, sometimes very high up in the falaise. As already noted, the different levels were connected by inner stairways and passageways, as at Ghār-e Shāh (Fig. 54). A stairway at Homāy Qal'a is preceded by a shaft which opens in the ceiling, and leads to two rooms at an upper level whose existence was to be kept secret (Fig. 25). The caves on one and the same level could be connected by inner corridors as at Homāy Qal'a (Fig. 25; Pl. XXV); in some cases they can be very large, and may form sharp bends, as for example the corridor on the back side of the Nāy Qal'a massif (Pl. XVII.b). Corridors of this kind can be seen at Bāmiyān (Pl. CVIII.a), where stairways are also present (see the stairways to Caves 387 (Pl. CVIII.b). The corridors at Kara Tepe are also very similar to these (Pl. CXIV.a, b), but the local sanctuary has a plan of its own.

In some cases we find real tunnels, cutting through a whole massif, as is the case at Tapa Hesār and Sangdara (where they are stepped to allow for the difference in height, Pl. LXVII), or cutting across the mountain to make the walk shorter, as is the case at Bayak (Fig. 72; Pl. LXXVIII). Similar features are found only at Fīl Khāna (Mizuno 1967: plans 7, 9, 10; cf. here Pl. CXII), where there is a very long tunnel (numbered c-f in Mizuno) — crossed by a shorter one — created for access to the westernmost group of caves, which originally did not open on the river side⁽¹⁾. The reasons why some of these passages were opened in the Qarabāgh-Jāghūrī region remain somewhat puzzling. The one at Tapa Hesār does not represent a significant cut with respect to the round of the massif, and the reason why it was excavated probably was that it led to inner, protected rooms (p. 67). Detailed survey of these cave groups and removal of the debris obstructing the tunnels would be necessary to understand their function.

In certain groups some of the caves could be reached only from outside by means of outer stairways and balconies made of wood. No trace remains of the timber used, but the presence of these features is witnessed by holes to be seen on the outer wall, as in the case of Homāy Qal'a (Fig. 24; Pl. XXII), or by the simple fact that there was no other possible access to the rooms, whose original doors now open on a void, as at Ghār-e Shāh (Fig. 56; Pl. LVIII.c). The presence of external wooden stairs and balconies is not documented elsewhere in Afghanistan, but are well known in the Buddhist cave architecture of Xinjiang, where the caves of some monastic groups, arranged in superimposed rows and unconnected one to the other as at Mogao (Peng Jinzhang & Wang Janjun 2000: figs. 3a, 3b), in a

few cases still preserved the outer wooden passageways at the time of Aurel Stein's visit (Stein 1912, II: pl. 159). At Qizil, the original wooden passageway has been restored before Caves 10 to 17 (*Xinjiang Kezier Shiku* 1997: p. 168, pl. 3, pp. 280-88, colour pl. 2).

Both the chapels and, more seldom, the monks' dwellings, may have one or more rooms attached (see Cave 10 at Nāy Qal'a and Cave 1 at Ghār-e Shāh; Figs. 17, 52-53). Some are extremely irregular in plan, and were most probably added or reworked during the post-monastic phase, as for instance Cave 1a at Gawargīn and Cave 3a at Ghār-e Shāh (Figs. 42, 54). Similar examples of reuse can be seen at Kakrak (e.g. Cave 47; Pl. CIX.b). These late rooms often have a low, irregular ceiling and floor level lower than that of the main cave. Access to them is by means of an opening with an unusually high sill, probably to prevent cattle from getting in. For reuse of the original side rooms the door openings were usually enlarged at the bottom.

Another feature clearly indicating a post-monastic occupation are the long, rectangular 'niches' opened both in the main, re-utilized caves and in the new, irregularly excavated ones, which are to be interpreted as mangers, as in Caves 5 and 6 at Ghār-e Shāh (Fig. 55). The occupants clearly lived there with the cattle, at least during the winter.

We have tried to distinguish as clearly as possible between the phases pertaining to the monastic occupation and those of reuse. To this end, we made sketches of the present appearance of the caves (also documented by the photographs) and, when necessary, further sketches reconstructing the original form of the monuments.

It is already clear that in many respects Bāmiyān is the best place affording comparison for the rock-cut architecture of the Qarabāgh-Jāghūrī area. However, the latter area includes typologies unknown in Bāmiyān, like the above-mentioned Cave 9 at Nāy Qal'a and Cave 2 at Sangdara (Figs. 14-16, 64-65). The former is a sanctuary with an inner chamber — where an image once stood on a pedestal — accessed by a few steps and a door; in plan, it has a certain resemblance to Cave 8 at Bāzāklik (Pl. CXV.a), and indeed Cave 2 at Mingoi near Shōrchuq (Pl. CXV.b).

Cave 2 at Sangdara was designed as a three-aisle sanctuary, reminiscent of the early rock-cut architecture of Western India. The two pillared halls at Shākī Nōka and Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl (Figs. 39, 79) are noteworthy. These quadrangular, flat-roofed halls, unfortunately very poorly preserved, also depend on Indian prototypes⁽²⁾.

(¹) I follow Simpson (1882: 326). The caves on the river (numbered 26-31 in Mizuno) were made of two rooms excavated along one and the same axis, and the inner ones — today almost completely collapsed due to water erosion — can now be seen from the river.

(²) It would be a simple matter to recall examples from the rock-cut architecture of western Deccan, but it would also be of little use. We know very little about the pre-Muslim architecture of Panjāb and Sind, which are Indian regions bordering southern Afghanistan.

and find no parallel in the Hindukush and northern regions — neither in rock-cut architecture nor in free-standing buildings.

There is little to be said about the decoration of the caves since the extant evidence is very scanty. This is due, in part, to the fact that the caves, and even whole groups, were left unfinished, with the decorative and iconographic programme not even started. This is, in particular, the case of Tapa Zaytūn, for reasons that we will try to explain below. In other cases, the post-monastic occupation led to the decay and disappearance of the original decoration. Cave 2 at Tapa Sanawbar bears evidence of intentional destruction of the decoration, while in other cases, as at Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl, erosion is responsible for the disappearance of the most of the sculpted decoration (Pl. LXXXIII.b-d), and indeed of the cave itself.

Patches of plaster, usually blackened by soot, survive here and there, occasionally showing traces of paint, as in Cave 9 at Nāy Qal'a. There is little doubt that some caves were painted, and that others were ready to be painted.

A few observations can be made on the techniques followed to excavate the caves in the massifs and complete their interiors, emerging particularly clearly from the unfinished examples of Tapa Zaytūn.

Excavation of the Rooms (Fig. 4)

The side of the massif on which the caves opened was evened out at the point where the doorway giving access to the room was to be cut. Excavation began on the upper part of the access (Fig. 4a), penetrating into the rock for about 1.5-2 m. Then the upper part of the cave was cleared, already giving form to the type of ceiling desired (flat, parabolic, etc.). Presumably this work continued until the entire area of the vault had been defined (Fig. 4b), using a horizontal working base dug out from the rock. The debris from the cave was probably piled up outside to create a sort of ramp for access. As the top part of the room took shape, the limits of the room were established creating the back wall, and reference in height, length and width was thus established.

Work then began on tracing out the top part of the central niche, if it was to feature (Fig. 4c). If the height of the room to be excavated came to 3 m (the average height of the caves of moderate dimensions), the working level was lowered by the entrance, leaving a higher level towards the back of the cave to continue excavation of the central niche. Once this upper part was removed, a bench was left running along all the sides at the same height (Fig. 4d), as is the case in Cave 3 on the Third Terrace at Tapa Zaytūn (Fig. 82).

Caves 15 and 16 at Tapa Zaytūn (Figs. 85-86) offer some other examples of different phases in the work

procedure to lower the levels. In Cave 15 the bench left by excavation runs along all the sides, while in Cave 16, where the back wall shows a completed central niche, it only runs along the side walls. We find another example of the bench appearing on all sides in Cave 12 at Nāy Qal'a (Fig. 20). In Cave 2 at Sangdara we see three benches left in place (Fig. 62; Pl. LXIV.c) — one along the right sidewall and part of the back wall (where it is higher), one along the back wall, where the top of the bench corresponds to the floor of the central niche, and one on the left sidewall, lower than the others. These are clearly what remains of the 'benches' to be removed. At the end of the work, the central niche would have been provided with a dais. At Shotor Ghār we see a more advanced stage of work: the central bench has already been lowered, and the dais before the central niche begins to appear (Figs. 104-105). Examples of benches left in place can be seen at Bāmiyān (Cave 732; Pl. CVII.a), and probably also at Kara Tepe (Pl. CXIV.b).

The work of cutting out the niches was performed from the lateral working benches (Fig. 4e). In Cave 17 at Tapa Zaytūn (Fig. 87) it can clearly be seen how work on the side niches was performed from a position directly on the remaining lateral benches; in this particular case, given the number of niches fashioned and their cadence the structural work can be said to have been completed. This cannot, however, be said of Cave 15 (Fig. 85), where the niches on the sidewalls are widely separated, but at the same distance on the two walls, which suggests that first the end niches were cut, the remaining space divided in two, and another niche opened in the intermediate space; further niches were fashioned in the intermediate areas until work was completed.

Cave 13 (Fig. 80) shows the side benches still in place but no niche in the back wall, which might seem to contradict the observations made above; however, the cave rises to less than 3 m in height, and the central niche could have been cut without any need of a bench.

In the final phase, the working benches were removed until the planned floor level was reached, leaving a dais before the central niche, if required (Fig. 4f). Cave 19 at Tapa Zaytūn (Fig. 89), clearly shows that the working bench along the left sidewall was being removed when the work was interrupted, while the one along the right sidewall had already been removed. In height it rises to the same level as the niches on the back wall. In Cave 3 (Fig. 82), the side benches are 1 m high, while the bench along the back wall comes close to 3 m in height. This is the 'scaffolding', which is in fact 1.5 m high in the western work-yards. It served to work a way down the walls in bands corresponding to the operating levels. As for the width of the benches (we are still referring to Cave 3), the side benches come to 1-1.5 m, with a width of 0.7-0.8 m at the back: this sufficed for the workman to perform his task with relative ease, and at the same time for the other workmen to take away the debris.

The method of excavating the rock by means of geometrical planes is as followed in the quarries, well

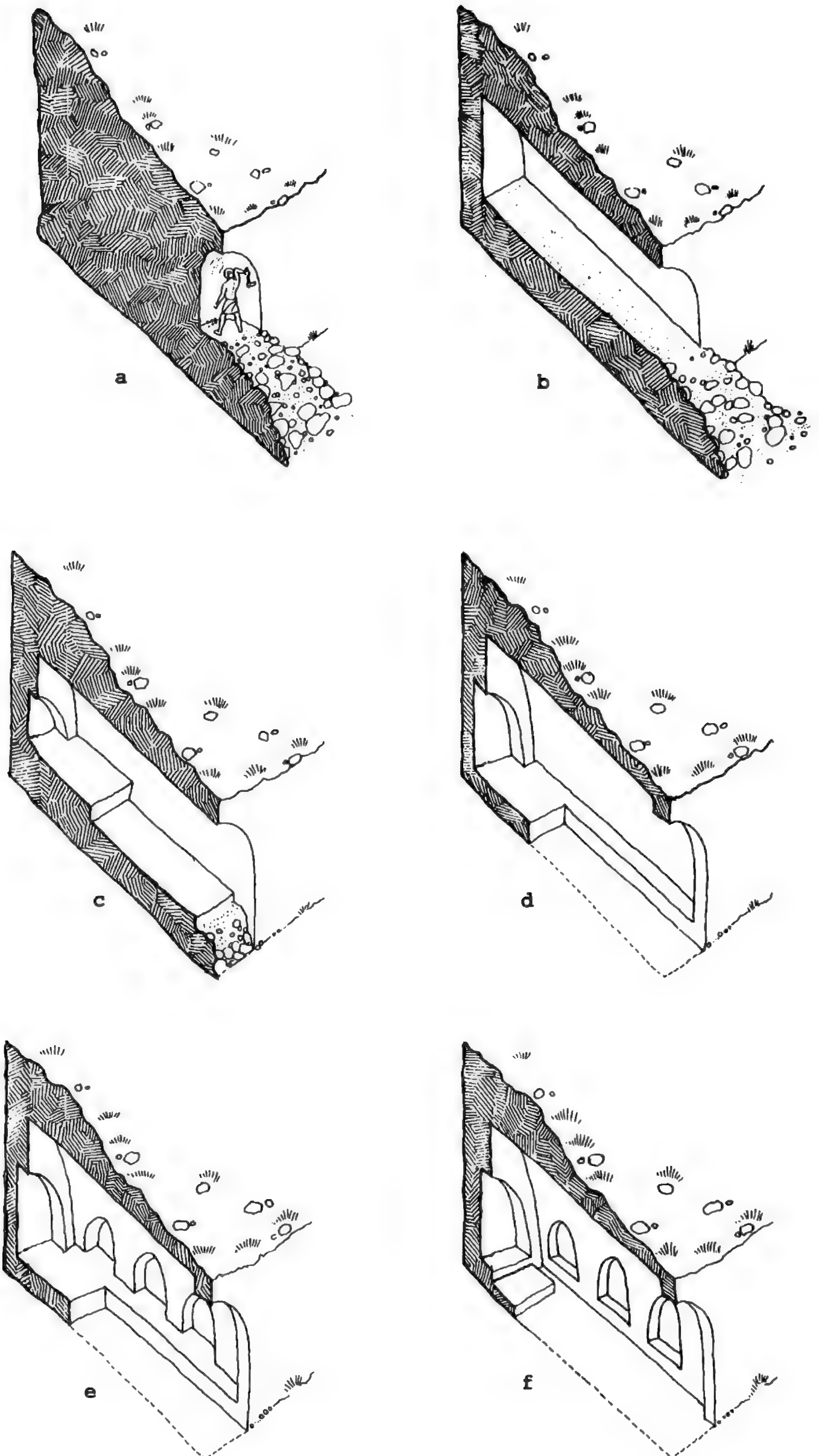


Fig. 4. Excavation of caves: working phases.

known in the ancient Mediterranean world. Examples can be seen in Waelkens 1994.

Finishing the Rooms

Although many of the rooms have been so eroded that we can no longer tell what techniques were applied to finish them, we do nevertheless have sufficient examples of the treatment of walls, ceilings, vaults and architectural decoration to reconstruct the techniques. In some cases we are faced with traces of very rough finishing, witnessed by large, widely separated scrape marks simply attesting to the early phase of cutting the room out of the rocky massif: a few examples are Cave 1a at Gawargīn (Pl. XLVI.b), Cave 1 at Ghār-e Shāh (Pl. LX.b) and Cave 17 at Homāy Qal'a (Pls. XXVI.b, XXVII.a); in other cases we find more finished surfaces showing signs of a tool delivering light blows from close to as in Cave 10 at Nāy Qal'a (Pl. XIII.b) and, in part, in Cave 3 at Sangdara (Pl. LXVI); finally, smooth surfaces are also to be seen, showing no evident signs of working apart from the scouring, as in Cave 7 at Ghār-e Shāh (Pl. LXII.c).

The signs of the finishing operations evidence the use of at least two tools. Use of the first tool, in all likelihood a small pickaxe, is attested by fairly large marks with the impression of the blow coming roughly at the centre; these centres are distanced at an average of 10-15 cm. The tool may well have had only one point, but the handle must have been not longer than 50-70 cm, as would be necessary for ease in use in awkward positions and partly in tunnels. This stage of rough-hewing was followed by the finishing stage, either with the same tool, but with closer, lighter strokes, the impressions of percussion almost touching, or with some other tool such as a small chisel used with a hammer, although this is a rather less likely hypothesis, there being no signs of such use on the walls or vaults. Nor is there any evidence of use of the flat chisel — the tool generally used together with the pointed chisel — although it must certainly have been used on the architectural decoration such as niche pilasters, capitals and arched lintels decorated with incised triangles, and of course for the slots to be seen by the doors and windows for beams to be inserted (see for example Caves 8 and 9 at Nāy Qal'a [Pls. VIII.a, IX.b], Cave 6 at Ghār-e Shāh [Pl. LXII.a], etc.). Thus the second tool used must be the flat chisel. Actually, given the nature of the rock (usually a soft sandstone), it is quite possible that the same chisels used on wood were also applied here, as indeed Waelkens (1994: 71) hypothesises for the ancient Mediterranean world.

As noted above, in some caves we find the surfaces smoothed down: virtually no signs of percussion remain thanks to the action of harder stones presumably chosen for abrasive purposes among the abundant smooth stones to be found in the water courses always present in the vicinity of the settlements, or present as inclusions in the rock formations themselves.

Where they have not been smoothed down, the rough wall surfaces are perfectly suited to hold a plaster coating upon which paint could be applied, as in fact we see in cave 9 at Nāy Qal'a and in Cave 2 at Tapa Sanawbar (Pl. XXXV.b), — two of the few caves still showing ample traces of plaster. Here the specialized craftsmen came in to decorate the surfaces according to the chosen designs.

The various stages of work and different tools used imply the existence of diverse specialized workers with the relevant equipment. We may imagine gangs of workmen with different qualifications and, possibly, different wages, as documented in the ancient Mediterranean world in the fields of sculpture and painting alike⁽¹⁾.

We have attempted to calculate the labour and time necessary to excavate some of the caves in order to form at least a rough idea of the time needed to complete a whole group of caves.

Cave 3 at Tapa Sanawbar (Fig. 31; Pls. XXXIII-XXXIV) was taken as first example. The excavation proper, made according to the *śilpin*'s plan, involved the excavation and removal of c. 1200 m³ of rock. Considering that the rock is relatively easy to work and that a labourer, working regularly with normal equipment and in normal climatic conditions, can excavate about 2 m³ per day, we can calculate 6-700 working days, to which we must add at least 300 more working days for removal of the debris. Thus we obtain c. 1000 working days, to be distributed among the components of a gang of workmen composed of at least twenty labourers (ten excavators and ten assigned to the removal of the excavated material). On the basis of this calculation, which is probably in excess, it must have taken c. 60 working days to excavate the chapel. The gang of workmen was probably much smaller, however, given both the conditions of the ground and the problems of organizing labour. Women and children were probably part of the gang, especially for removing the debris, as still happens today. Three to four months were necessary to excavate such a chapel as Cave 3 at Tapa Sanawbar.

Obviously, there had yet to be implemented the entire decorative and iconographic programme, consisting mainly of wall paintings in tempera on a plastering of at least two layers of earth and straw of differentiated granulometry and sifting; the niches must have contained images in unbaked clay or paintings. Supposing the whole interior were painted, this stage of work (consisting of about 600 m² of wall paintings) may be reckoned to have taken at least 150 working days of

(1) On the specialized categories of workers distinguished with different pay rates under the Domitians, cf. Cozzo (1928: 71 ff., 87 ff.). On the craftsmen exempted from paying *munera* during the Empire of Constantine the Great, cf. Calabi Limentani (1961: 870).

two master craftsmen with their assistants, plus the workers engaged on the scaffolding. This means another 5 months of work. Altogether, we calculate 7-8 months of continuous work to complete the chapel. Since the actual work was, for climatic reasons, only possible from March-April to October-November, with some interruptions, it took one year or a little more to complete the work.

In general terms, one large chapel and a few monks' dwellings could be completed in one year on a limited budget, i.e. with the possibility of hiring a gang no larger than 20 workmen. If the budget was larger and 50 workers or so were available, another chapel could be completed in the same place. Skilled labourers (master builders, sculptors, painters) were, however, probably not as easy to come by as the unskilled, since they are likely to have been engaged on more than one yard at the same time, and the completion of a chapel could be much delayed (as indeed seems to have been the case in many cave groups).

A rough calculation has also been made of the time needed to create the southern group of caves at Tapa Zaytūn (Fig. 80), which, although destined to remain unfinished, was clearly planned and executed at one time. The cubic metres excavated to create the caves, without calculating the niches and the small annexed rooms, and leaving a few caves out of the count, can be estimated as follows:

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|---------------------|
| II Terrace | Cave 3 | 1100 m ³ |
| III Terrace | Cave 5 | 50 m ³ |
| | Cave 6 | 100 m ³ |
| | Cave 7 | 40 m ³ |
| | Cave 8 | 230 m ³ |
| | Cave 9 | 150 m ³ |
| | Cave 11-11a | 150 m ³ |
| | Cave 12 | 45 m ³ |

| | | |
|-------------|------------|---------------------|
| III Terrace | Cave 13 | 65 m ³ |
| | Cave 14 | 45 m ³ |
| | Cave 15 | 630 m ³ |
| | Cave 16 | 630 m ³ |
| | Cave 17 | 620 m ³ |
| | Cave 18 | 430 m ³ |
| | Cave 19 | 300 m ³ |
| | Cave 20 | 430 m ³ |
| IV Terrace | Cave 23 | 1200 m ³ |
| | Cave 21 | 200 m ³ |
| | (17 cells) | |
| V Terrace | Cave 24 | 35 m ³ |
| | Cave 25 | 30 m ³ |
| Total | | 6480 m ³ |

To this, the terracing operations and the routes and/or stairways linking them are also to be added. The latter, although probably left in the rough state, bring the amount of material excavated and removed to at least twice the preceding cubic metres, and thus another 12.000/13.000 m³. Altogether, this comes to 18.000 m³, corresponding to at least 10.000 more man-days: this means 100 excavators, mostly unskilled, and 100 labourers for the removal of the debris for no less than 3 months. This number must be considerably reduced since the presence of hundreds of people in one and the same place would create serious organizational problems. Allowing for the presence of 50 workers on the work site (it is unlikely that work at such a grandiose site was started without a substantial outlay of funds available), it probably took 12 months, distributed over a couple of years, to excavate the caves as we see them now.

In the case of Tapa Zaytūn neither the painted decoration nor the moulding of clay or metal statues etc., which would have taken much longer due to the size and variety of the planned sanctuary, was ever carried out.

Only two groups of caves, Nāy Qal'a and Homāy Qal'a, are located to the east and south-east, respectively, of Mount Dehbaday (3751 m), which is the divide between the Arghandāb river system (to the west) and the rivers flowing to the southeast, which belong to the Daryā-ye Ghaznī basin (Figs. 3, 5).

1. Nāy Qal'a

This is one of the largest groups of cave temples of the Qarabāgh-Jāghūrī region, in profile visible from afar (Pl. I.a) as we approach from the track leading off from the main road after passing the Kōtal-e Zardālū, at 48.3 km from the fork to Bāzār-e Qarabāgh on the Ghaznī-Qandahār highway. From there, you follow the track for 12 km, leaving the flat mountain of Gawāra-ye 'Āj ben Ūnūq (Kōh-e Gawāra on 1:100.000 map; Fig. 5) behind you to the left, and to the right the village of Qaryā-ye Shāhkōh at the foot of the mount of the same name (Pl. IV.a). You come to the school of Nāy Qal'a, and proceed for about two km more on foot.

The imposing massif (Figs. 6-8; Pls. I.b-III.a) stands in an isolated position in the narrow valley of the Rūd-e Shāhkōh (a tributary of the river Jelgad/Tang-e Zardālū), on the right bank, rising above the village of Dahan-e Ghāra; on the right side is the old village, almost entirely abandoned (Pl. V.a).

The massif, divided into two parts, is particularly subject to falls of rock, huge stone blocks lying at its foot. As a result of continual collapse access to the upper rows of caves is barred. The caves, partly inhabited, open at different levels on the northeastern part of the massif, facing visitors as they arrive. Other caves open onto the small valley separating this part of the massif from the southwest side. It is here that we find the remains of the abandoned village of Dahan-e Ghāra. South of the latter part of the massif, a long flight of steps of at least 1 m in width is to be seen, cut into the rock digging a broad opening in the ground to reduce the gradient (Pl. III.b). We do not know what purpose the steps served, but we may well imagine that they led either to some other important caves or to a *stūpa*, again carved into the rock.

There are no caves on the northwestern side of the massif.

In pre-Muslim times, this group of caves or a fortress nearby⁽¹⁾ was a refuge and the last stronghold of the Buddhist rulers of Zābulistān, as appears from Zābul's last king taking shelter in Nāy Qal'a to escape from Ya'qub b. Laith, who eventually captured him (Gold 1976: 172). Later on, at the time of the Ghaznavids, it served either as a place where the crown prince could find safety during his father's absence from Ghaznī or as a hiding-place for the state treasure. The place was also



Fig. 6. Nāy Qal'a, sketch of massif.

used as state prison, as in the case of the poet Mas'ūd Sa'd-e Salmān, of Sultān Zahīr al-Dawla Ibrāhīm b. Mas'ūd, who had held him captive, and of the latter's son. For more details on the whole matter, and for the relevant passages from the Arabic and Persian sources, the reader is referred to the Appendix of Minoru Inaba at the end of this volume.

The importance of the region in the Ghaznavid-Ghurid period is further stressed by the existence of an imposing *ziyārat* at Tālāb-e Begum, on the road leading from Ghaznī to Nāwor (Fussman 1974a: pl. 23, fig. 31).

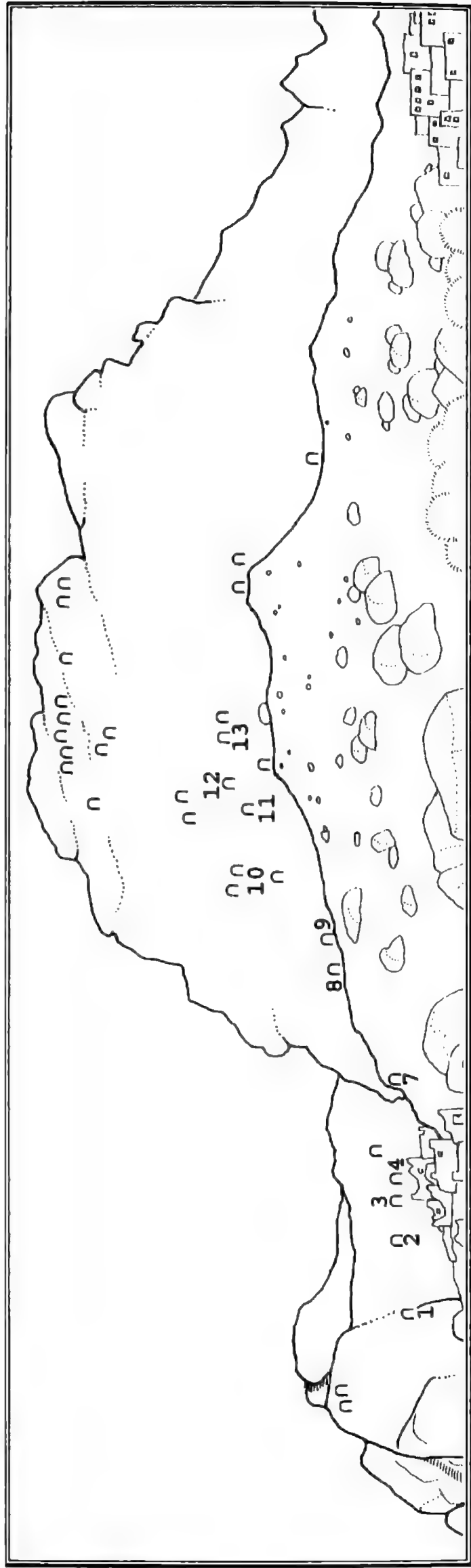
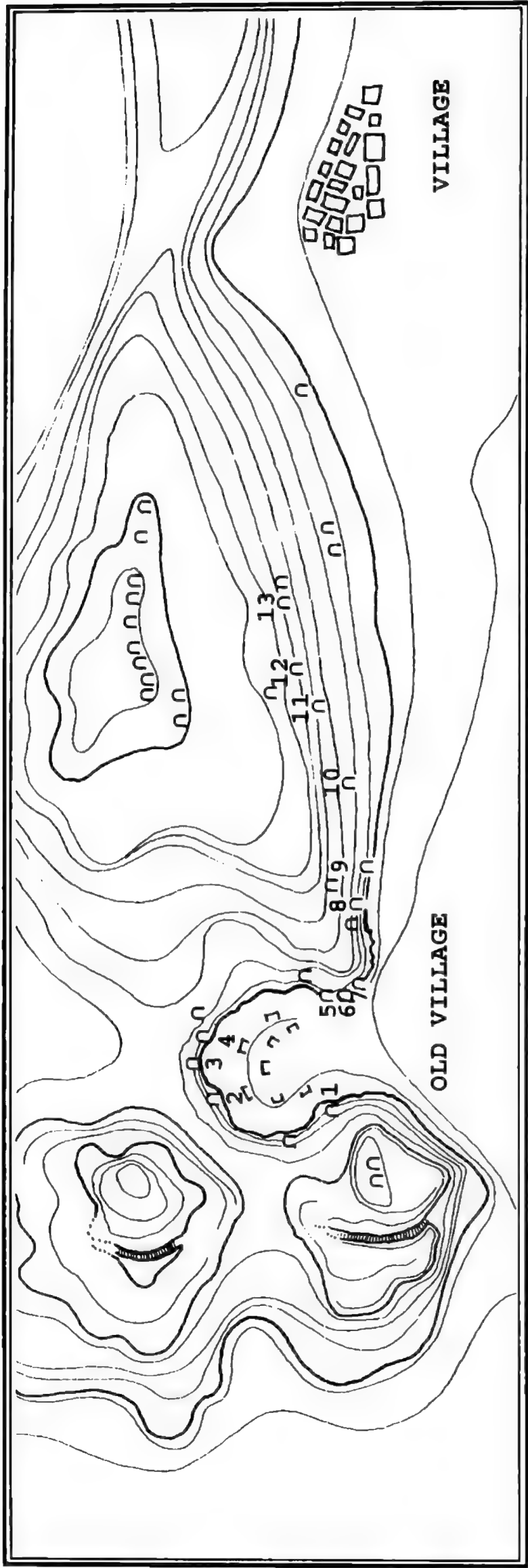
Left Part of the Massif

A diminutive valley opens in the left part of the massif (Fig. 9; Pl. V.a), partly concealed by the ruins of the old village. The caves, which open at different levels, were partly designed for worship, while others were probably used as monks' dwellings.

Cave I (Fig. 10; Pl. VI.a)

The cave has a barrel-like shape, and is covered by a flat ceiling. A niche (1.5 × 1.5 × 0.5 m) opens in the back wall. Several small niches are found on the right sidewall, in three rows. The eight niches of the upper row measure about 0.25 × 0.30 × 0.25 m; the last niche in the second row is rectangular, and may be a reworking of two smaller niches.

⁽¹⁾ No structural ruins are reported from the area, with the exception of those of the abandoned village on the left side of the massif. It probably was the Buddhist cave group which was used in Ghaznavid times.



Figs. 7-8. Nāy Qal'a, sketch plan and prospect.

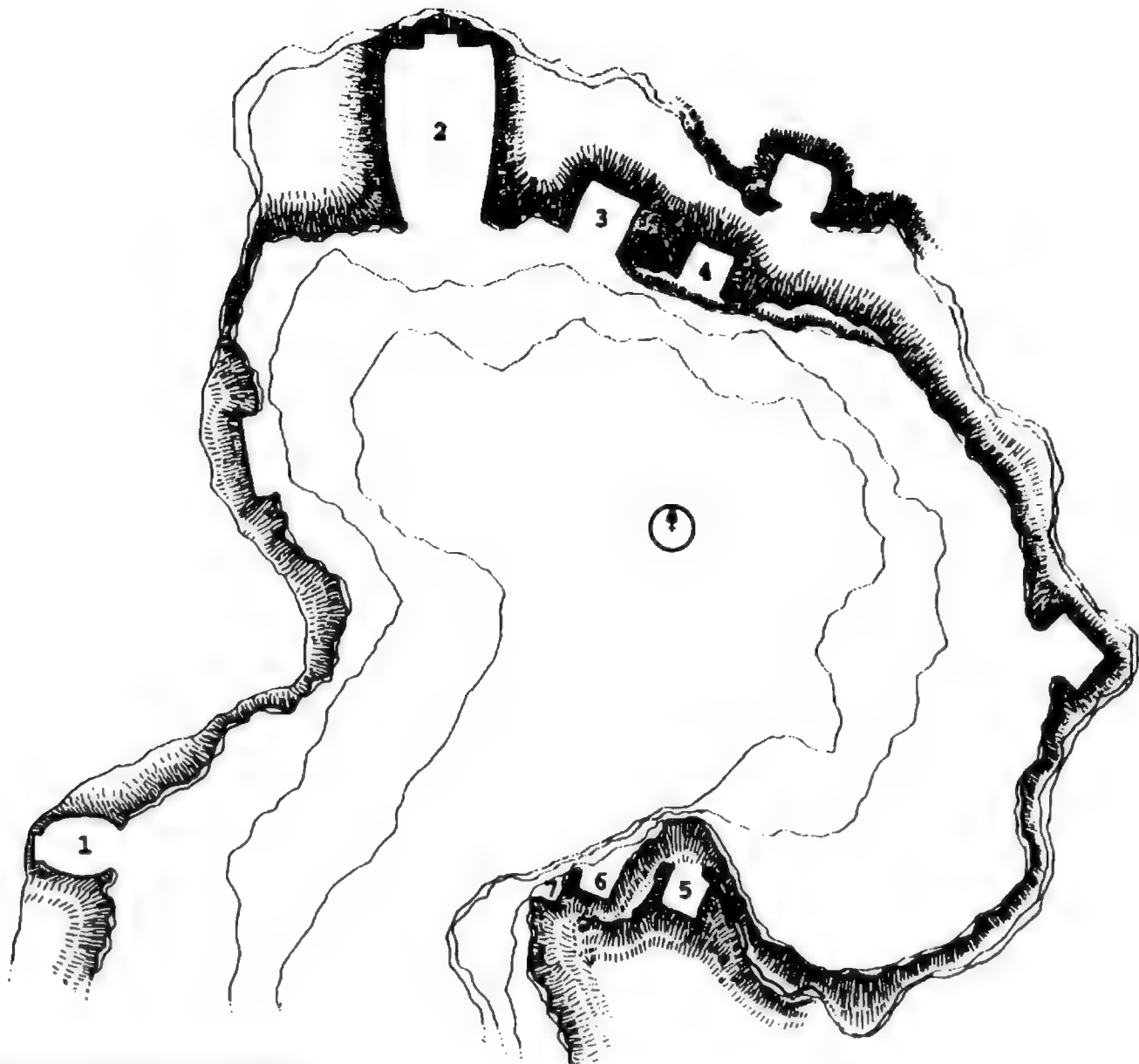


Fig. 9. Nāy Qal'a, valley in the left part of the massif.

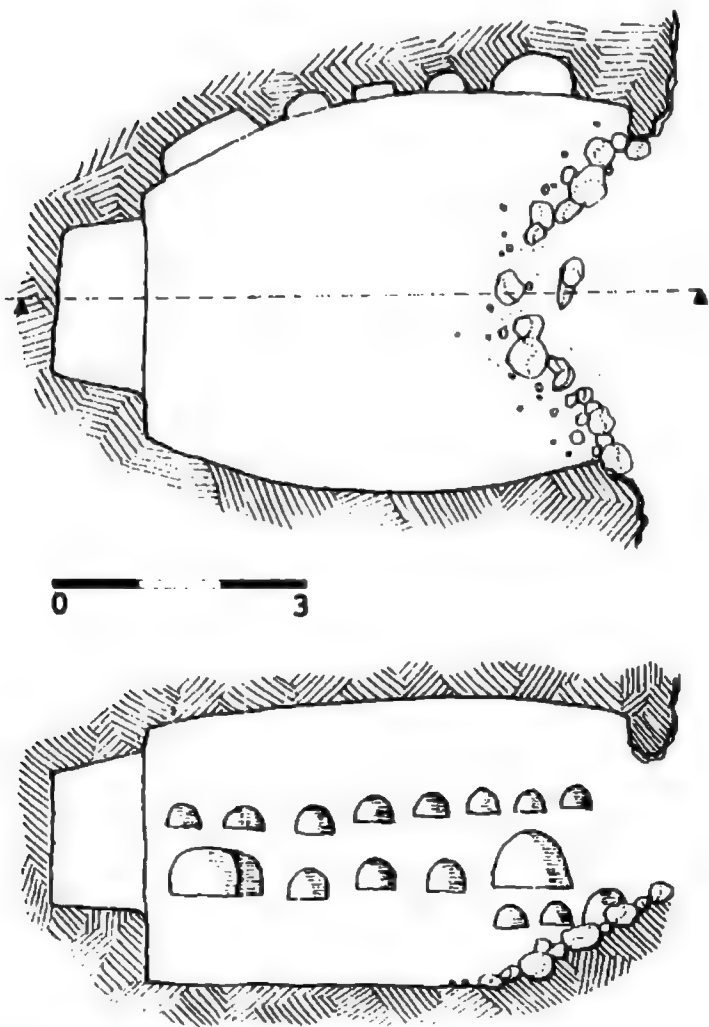


Fig. 10. Nāy Qal'a, Cave 1: plan and section.

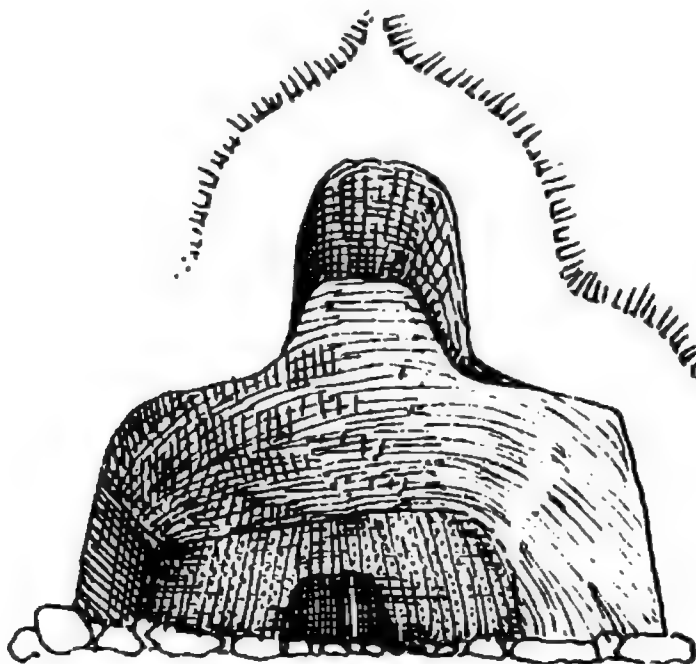


Fig. 11. Nāy Qal'a, sketch of Cave 2.

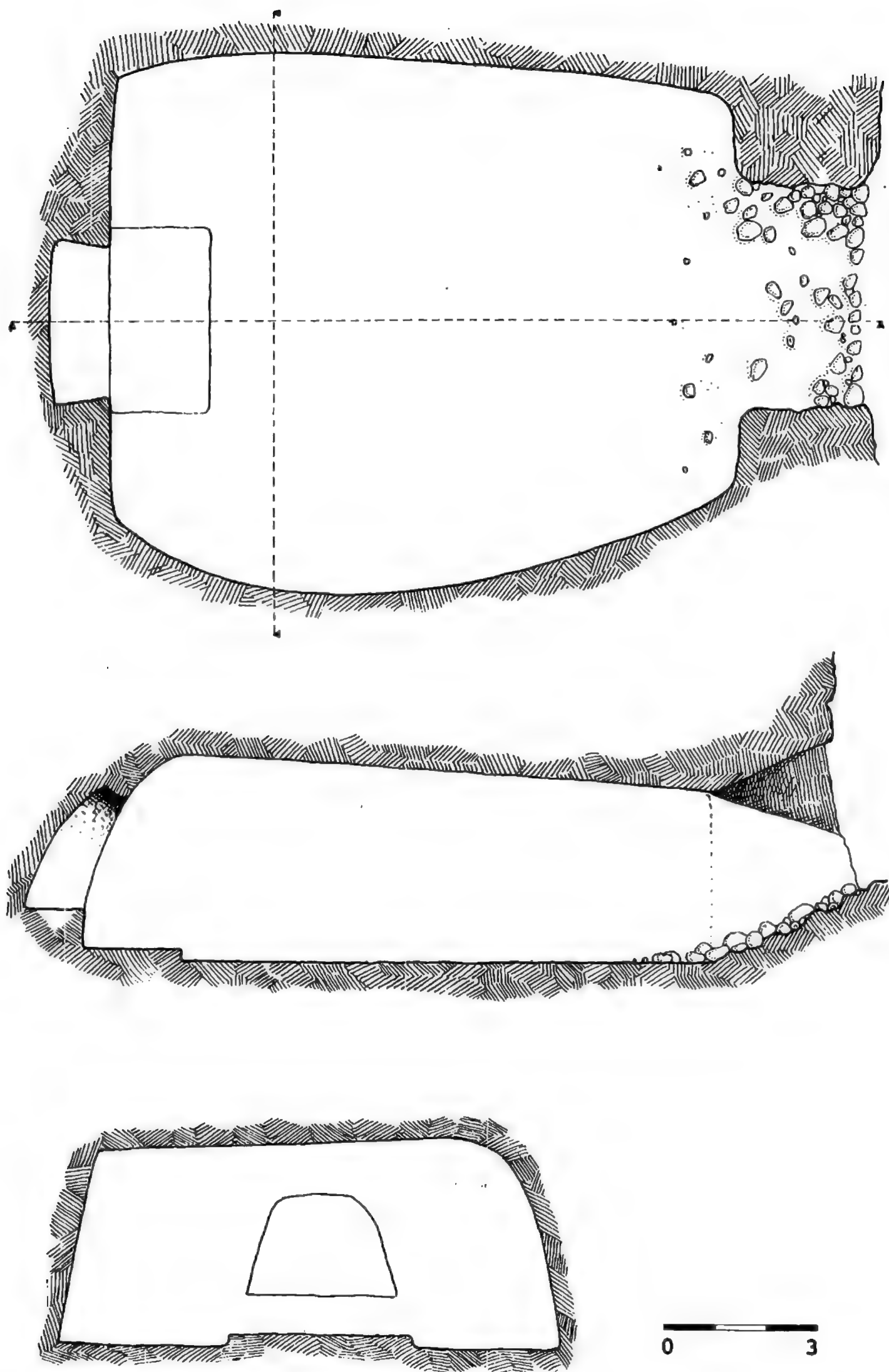


Fig. 12. Nāy Qal'a, Cave 2: plan and sections.

Cave 2 (Figs. 11-12; Pls. VI.b, VII.a)

This cave has the form of an irregular rectangle measuring c. 13×9.8 m, thus being one of the largest of the whole complex. It is the only cave preserving the façade intact, a rare occurrence not only in Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī, but also in the other groups of Buddhist caves in the whole of Afghanistan. The entrance, perfectly oriented to south, is in the shape of a low arch opening upwards in the centre. The opening is underlined on the exterior by a trilobate arch, much worn. The upper part of the opening, 1.7 m high, slants towards the interior so as to allow for more light. The entrance to the cave is partly obstructed by fallen stones.

The sidewalls in the interior are tapering, and the ceiling is roughly flat. The cave has no decoration but a large niche in the back wall, which measures c. $2 \times 3 \times 1$ m, placed 0.8 m above a low dais, measuring $0.1 \times 3.5 \times 2$ m. A small opening on the left side of the back wall is referable to the post-monastic phase.

Caves 3-7 (Pl. VII.b)

After passing *Caves 3* and *4*, which have rectangular entrances, you reach the right end of the small valley, where *Cave 5* can be seen. It is rectangular, with a flat ceiling. The front part has collapsed, and the cave is filled with debris. The front part of *Cave 6* nearby is collapsed; the cave has slanting sidewalls and flat ceiling. *Cave 7* is similar to it. Proceeding to the right, one notes several caves, only one of which was visited.

Cave 8 (Fig. 13; Pl. VIII)

This cave has a rectangular door (1.8×1.2 m) with slots for a beam. A slot for the bolt can be also observed. The cave is rectangular, with slanting walls and flat ceiling, and is filled with debris. There is a niche covered by a *caitya* arch obtained by carving a triangle at the top. The arch is doubled by a slightly sunken band, perfectly smooth.

Central Part of the Massif

Proceeding further to right, one reaches *Cave 9* and the caves excavated in the central, higher part of the massif (Pl. XI.a). A few of them could be visited and documented.

Cave 9 (Figs. 14-16; Pls. IX.a-X.b)

This cave consists of a rectangular hall measuring 10×8 m covered by a flattened parabolic vault 7 m high, and an inner sanctum of 3×2.5 m. A narrow bench, 50 cm high, probably meant to be removed had the cave been completed, runs along the back, right and left walls. The original plaster, on which traces of red paint can be made out under the soot, is preserved on the walls. The fore part of the cave is collapsed, and the foundations of the modern stone building constructed inside the room hide the original access level.

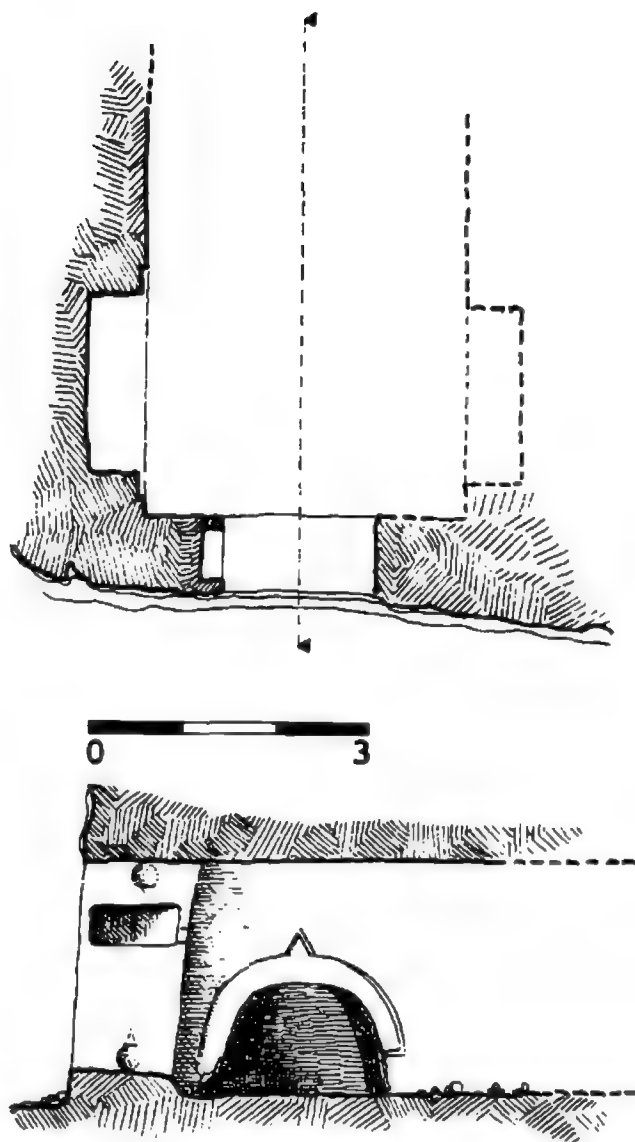


Fig. 13. Nāy Qal'a. Cave 8: plan and section.

The sanctum is entered through a well-wrought door at the centre of the back wall, which shows two carefully cut slots for wooden beams at top. It is preceded by a stair composed of seven steps 25 cm high and 35 cm long. The sanctum, covered by a flat ceiling and 3 m high, preserves a central pedestal preceded by a lower bench, with a hole probably made to fix the tenon of an image; it is flanked by two smaller pedestals (unless they are segments of an unremoved working bench). Two small rectangular chapels ($1.7 \times 1.4 \times 0.95$ m) open on both sides of the room, each with a small niche on the back wall. It is probable that three metal images stood on the pedestals, while it is not clear whether the side chapels also contained images.

This cave — an actual sanctuary — is the only one of its kind seen in Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī, and finds no comparison either at Bāmiyān, or in any other cave groups in Afghanistan. Mention has already been made of a few caves at Mingoī near Shōrchuq and at Bāzāklik in Xinjiang which can be compared with this sanctuary to a certain extent (above, p. 21; Pl. CXV.a. b). The idea of a hidden sanctum preceded by another room of some sort can be found in the Buddhist rock-cut architecture of western Deccan from early times, but no precise prototype is available; nor do we have any convincing example from the temple architecture of India, the combination of a *garbhagrha* and a preceding *maṇḍapa*

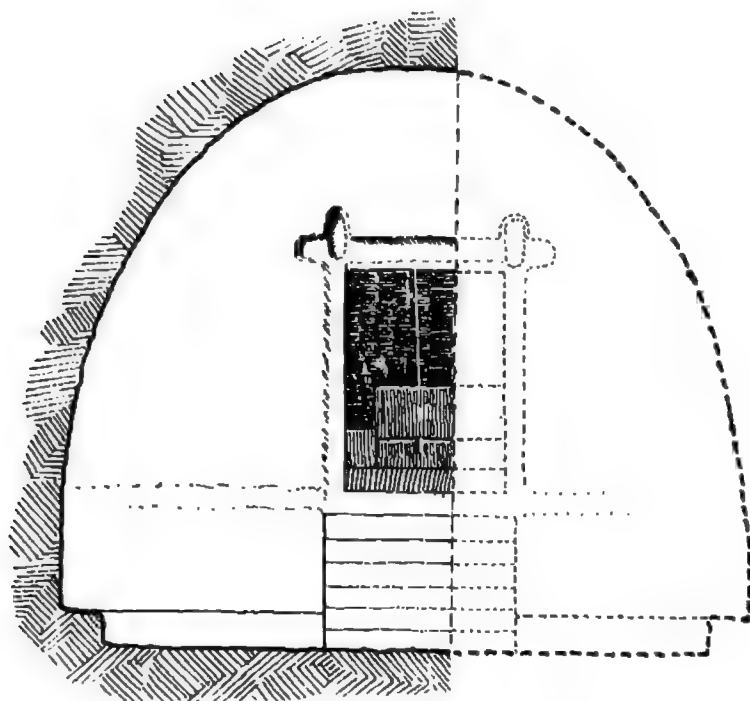
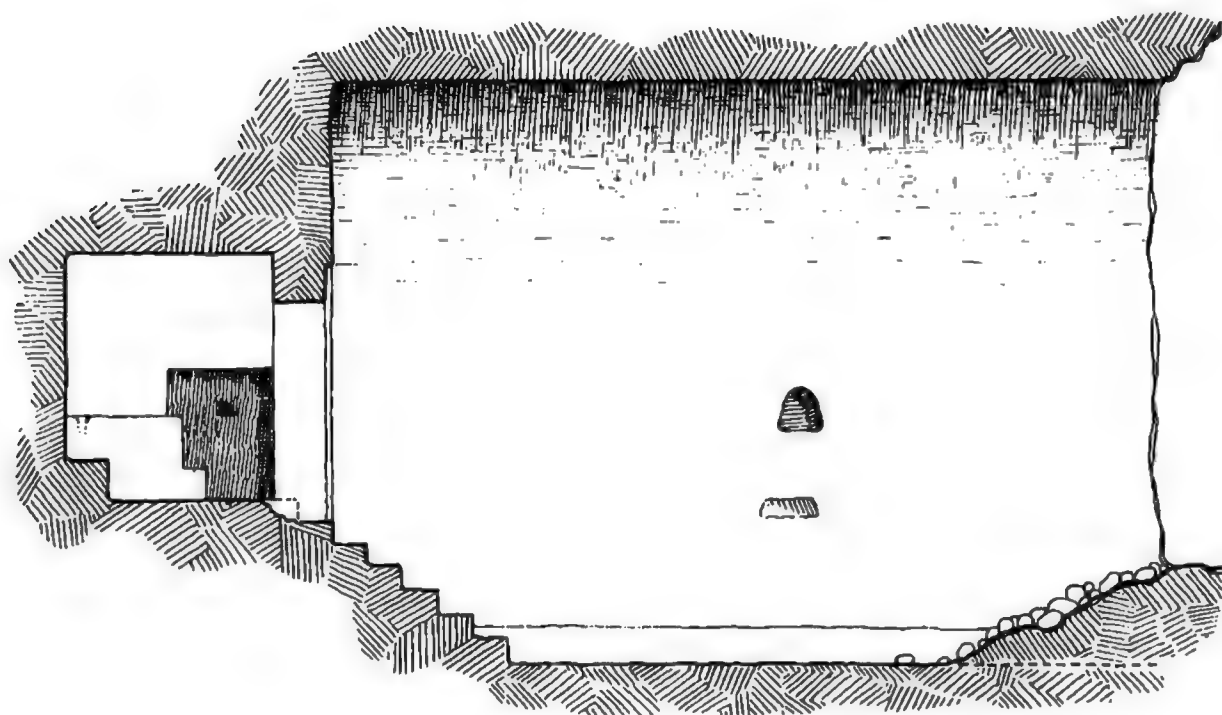
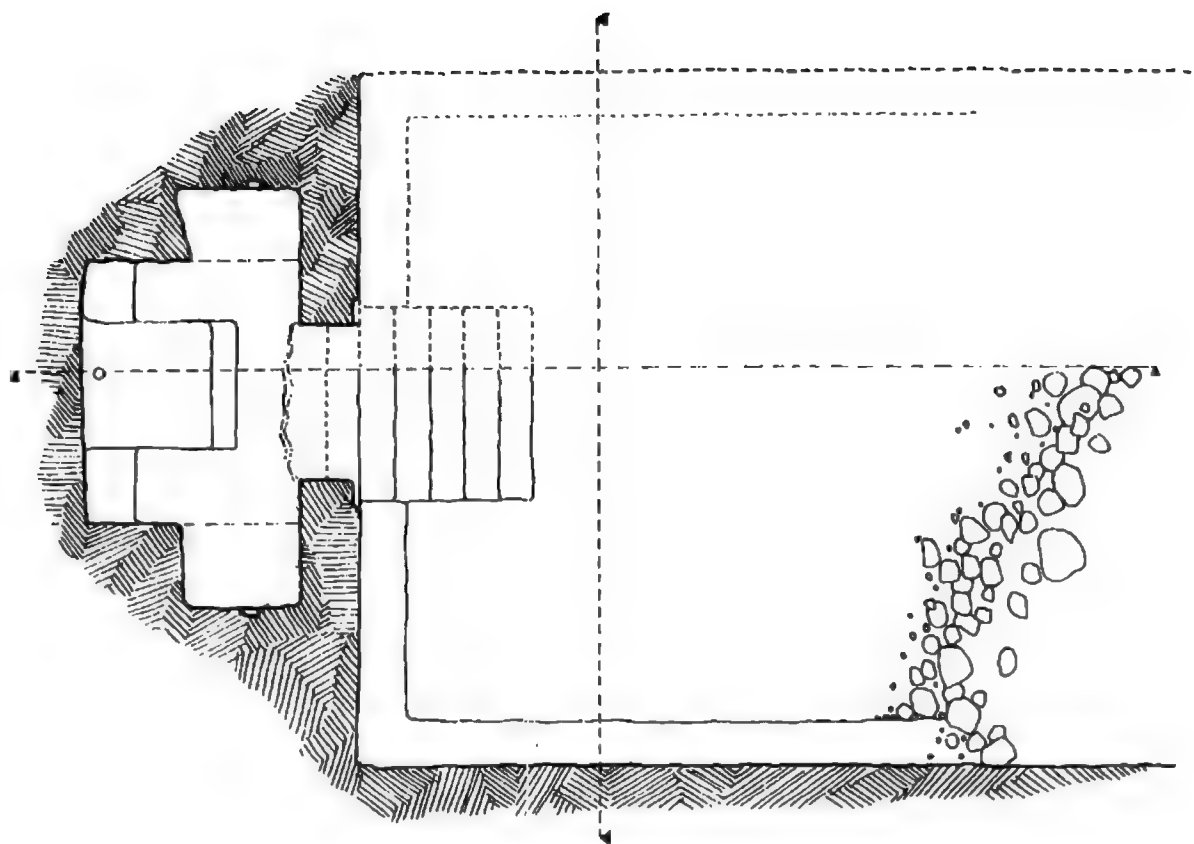


Fig. 14. Nāy Qal'a, Cave 9: plan and sections.

being too generic to throw any light on the origin of this architectural model.

Caves 10 and 10a, Corridor 10b, Cave 10c (Figs. 17-18; Pls. XI.a, XII.a-XIV.b)

Cave 10 measures 7.5×3.5 m and is covered by a parabolic vault, 3.3 m high. The entrance is partly collapsed. A large niche ($1.6 \times 2.2 \times 0.5$ m) opens on the back wall, preceded by a low bench 1 m large which runs along the whole length of the wall. It has three small holes at the centre on the front, perhaps pertaining to the phase of reuse. There is a small niche for a lamp to the right of the main one. Five holes 10 cm wide in two rows can be observed on both walls of the cave, probably made during the phase of reuse to hold wooden beams for lofting.

You enter *Cave 10a* (4.5×3 m) through a rectangular passage at the beginning of the left wall of the main cave. It is higher than the main cave, and pertains to the monastic phase, as can be deduced from both its regular shape and its position (side caves are usually entered from a door near the entrance to the main room). The rounded ceiling is 2 m high. On the left wall, in correspondence to the entrance, there is another door leading to a room that cannot be entered. The small opening on the right wall near the corner with the back wall is a later addition, as can be seen from its size and the fact that the threshold is nearly 1 m higher than the floor of the main cave.

An opening on the right side of *Cave 10* leads to *Corridor 10b*, which is 60 cm lower, reached by a few steps. From this corridor, partly collapsed, one enters *Cave 10c* by means of a rectangular door with slots for a wooden lintel. The room is squarish, and measures c. 3.5×3.5 m, with a flat ceiling.

Caves 11, 11a (Fig. 19; Pl. XV)

Cave 11 is a rectangular cave, measuring 8.5×4.2 m, with parabolic vault reaching a height of more than 4 m, flattened on top. There is a large niche (2×1.8 m) on the back wall, two smaller ones on the right wall, and a diminutive niche on the left side. A small door on the right gives access to a room (*Cave 11a*), which measures 3.3×3.2 m and whose floor is 20 cm lower than that of the main cave. Slots for a beam can be seen high up over the door. It is difficult to establish whether this room belongs to the original or post-monastic phase, as some evidence would suggest. The quadrangular hollow at the centre of the floor is probably to be interpreted as the access, now filled up, from a lower room. A similar access is documented in large *Cave 23* at Tapa Zaytūn (below) and in *Cave 14* at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pl. 5.2).

Caves 12, 12a, 12b, 12c (Fig. 20; Pls. XI.b, XVI)

This is a rectangular cave measuring 7×5.5 m with flat ceiling and a low bench running along all four walls — a feature left unexcavated. Entry to the cave is now

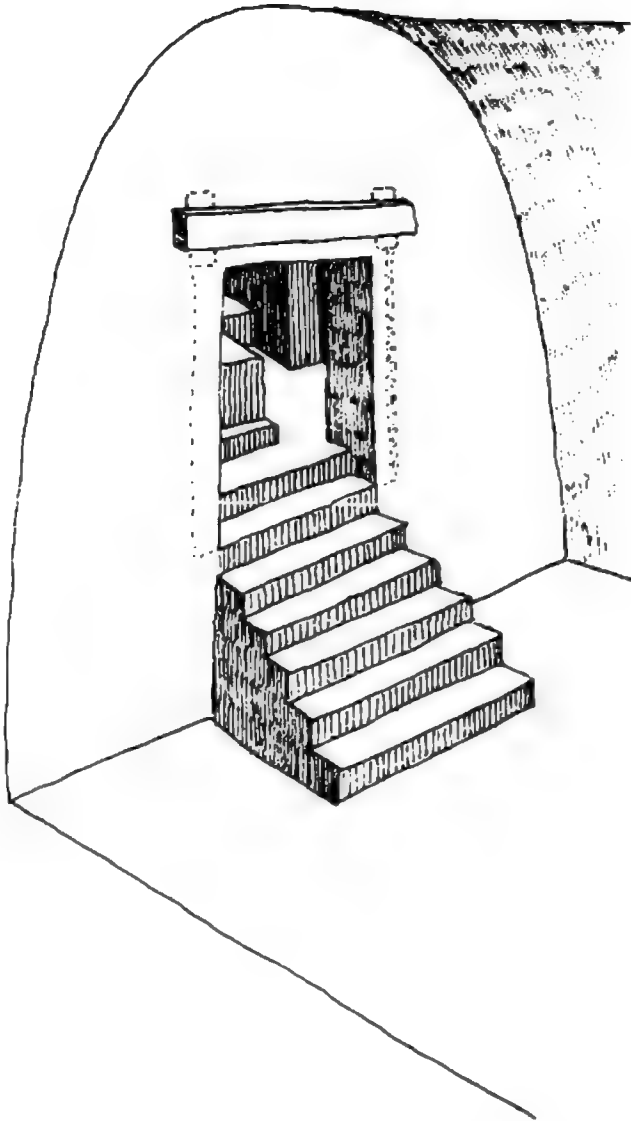


Fig. 15. Nāy Qal'a, Cave 9: reconstruction of entrance to sanctum.

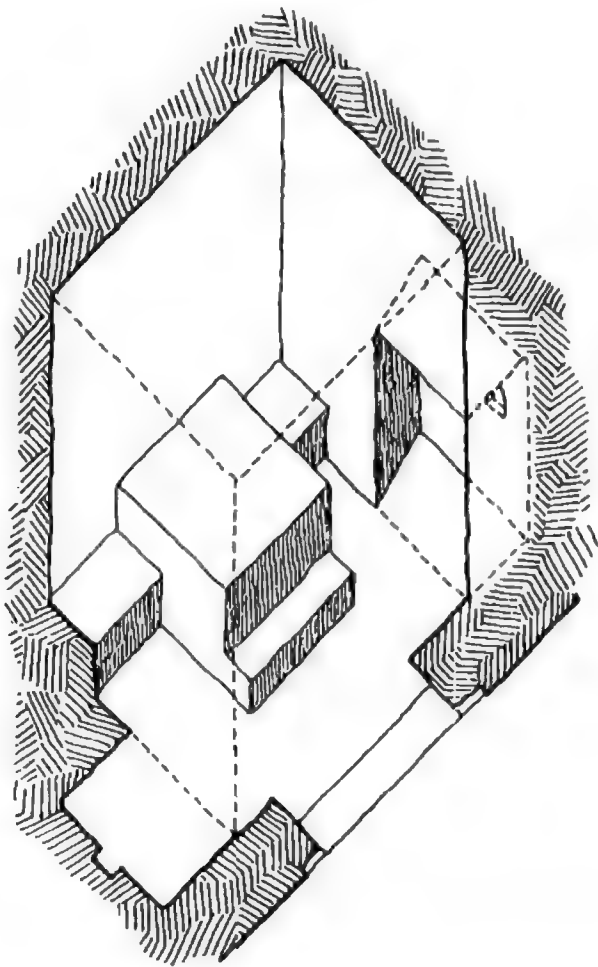


Fig. 16. Nāy Qal'a, Cave 9: axonometric view of sanctum (sketch).

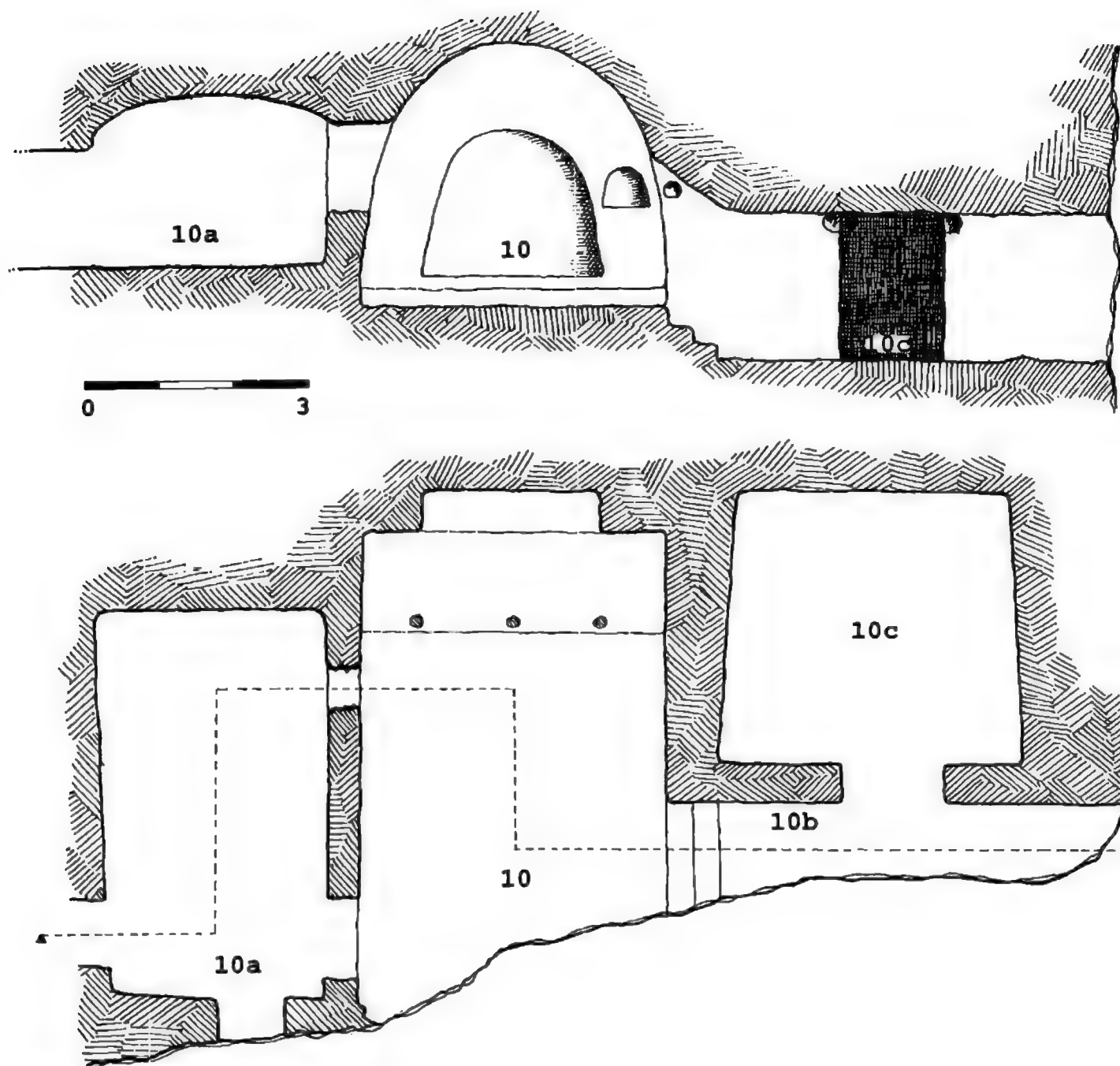


Fig. 17. Nāy Qal'a, Caves 10-10c: plan and sections.

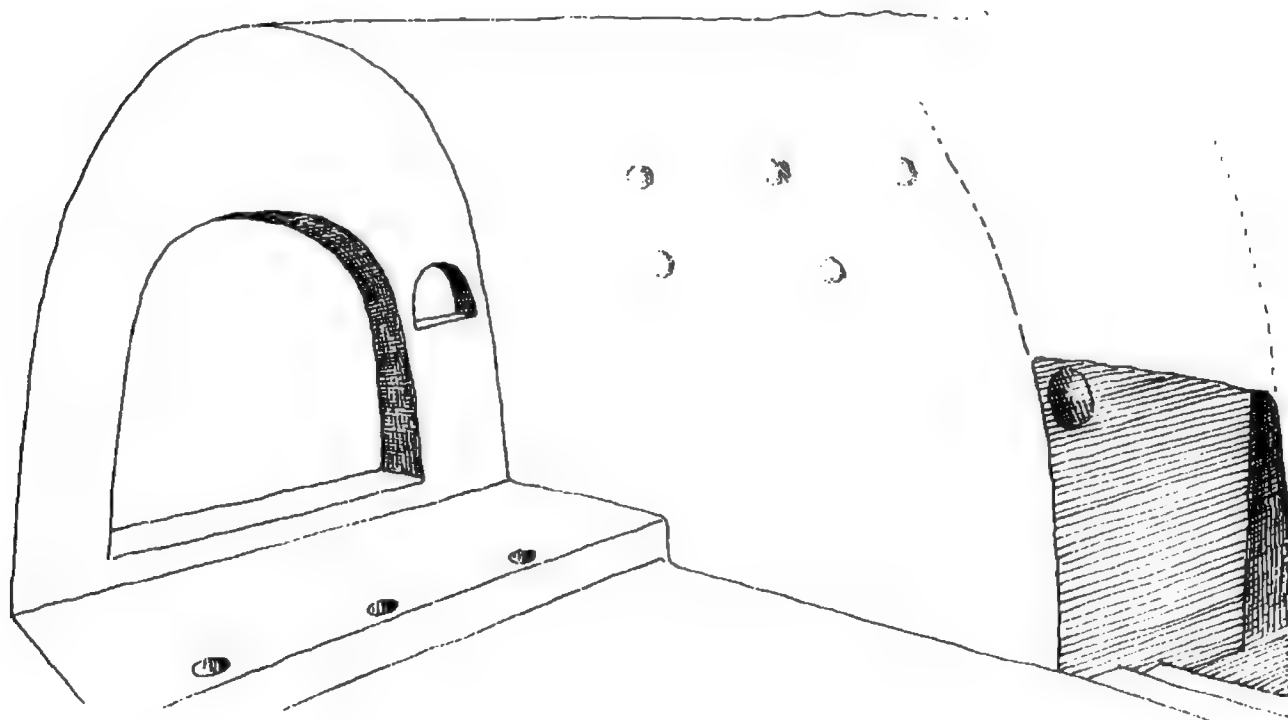


Fig. 18. Nāy Qal'a, sketch of Cave 10.

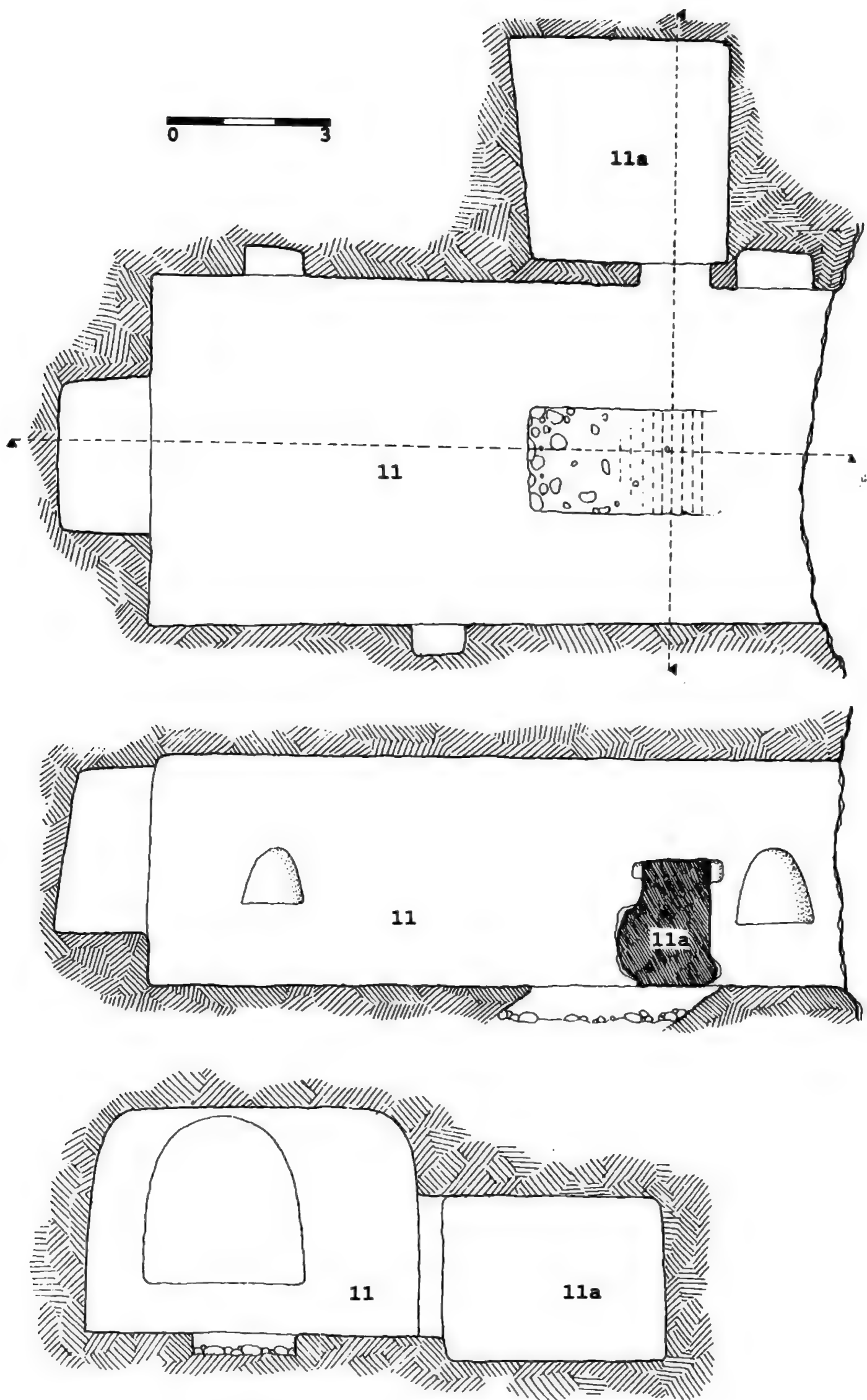


Fig. 19. Nāy Qal'a, Caves 11, 11a: plan and sections.

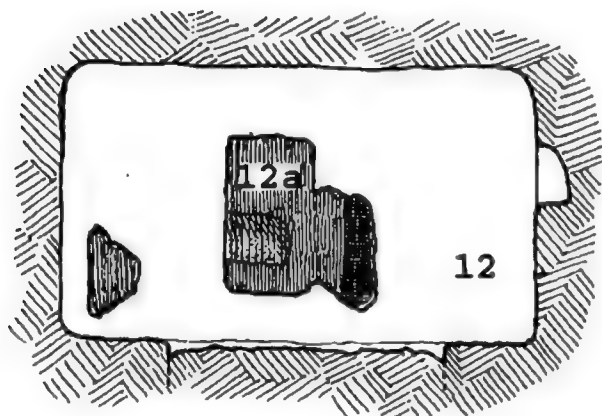
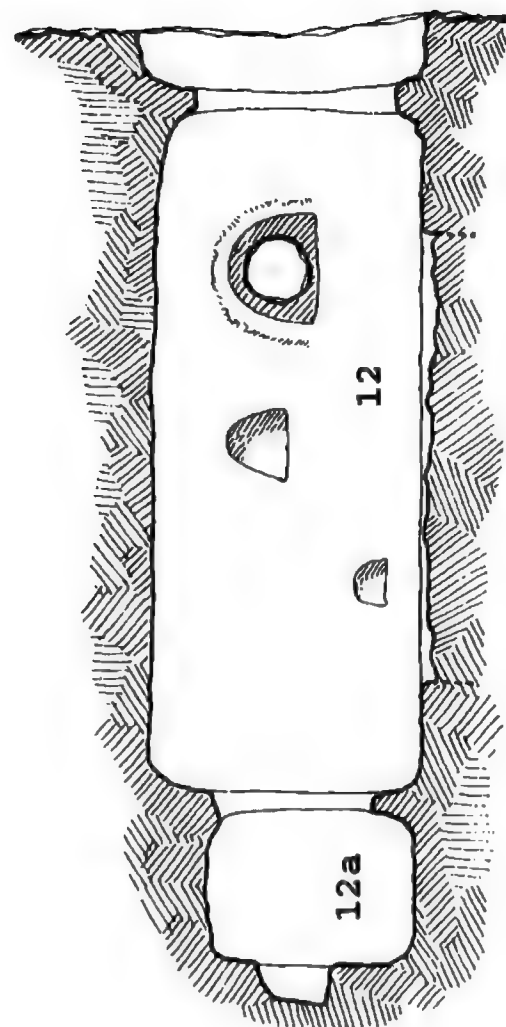
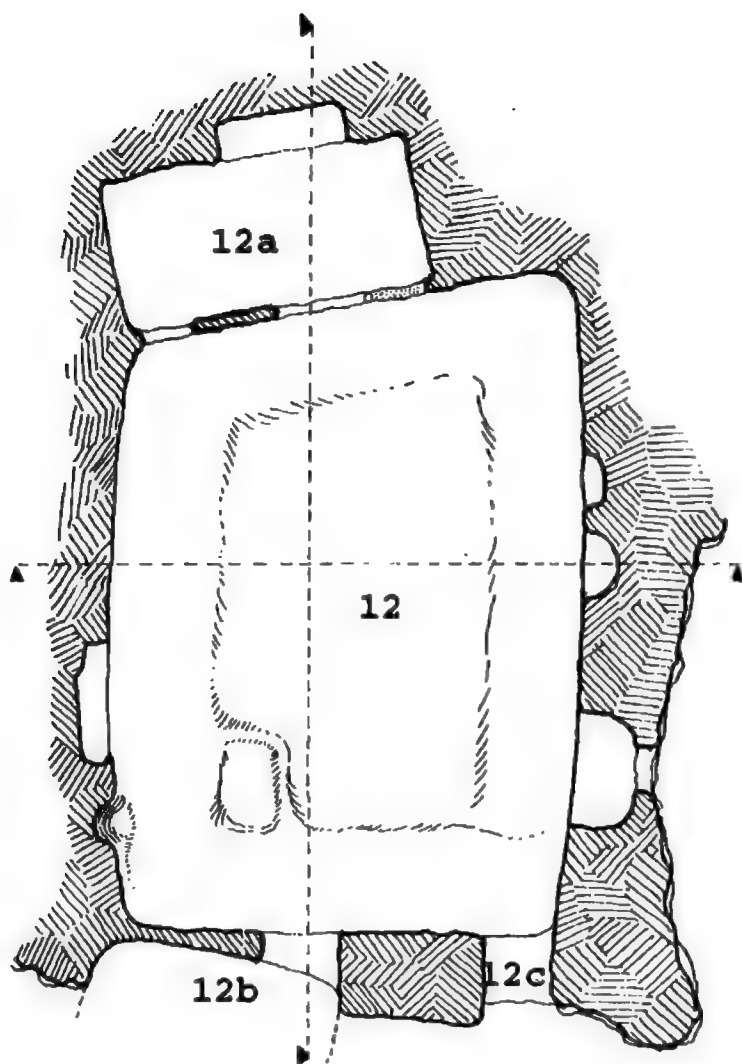


Fig. 20. Nāy Qal'a, Caves 12, 12a: plan and sections.

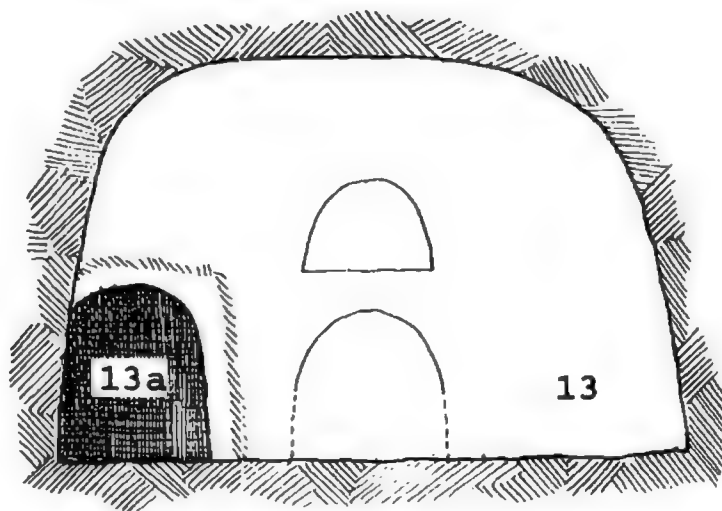
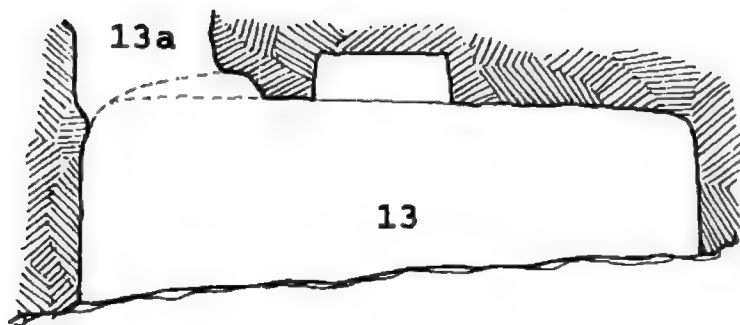


Fig. 21. Nāy Qal'a, Caves 13, 13a: plan and section.

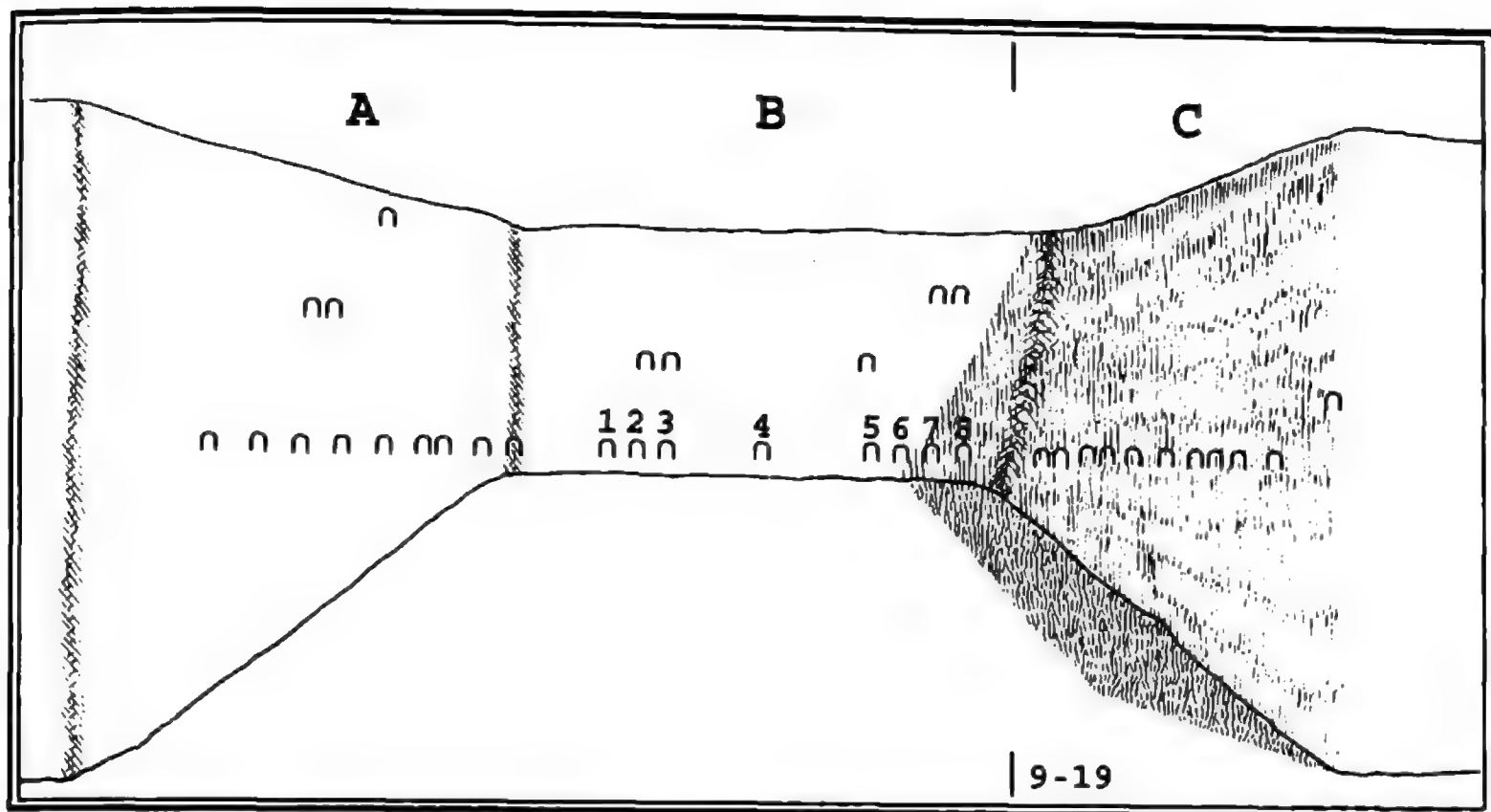


Fig. 22. Homāy Qal'a: scheme with position of caves.

through two openings, one of which made from the back wall of collapsed *Cave 12b*. Three niches open on the right wall at different levels, the one closer to the entrance being doubled on top with a decorative band in relief, much worn. The back wall of the cave was broken through to let the light in. Another niche, opened during the phase of reuse, opens on the left wall. A few other structures, such as a manger near the entrance also attest to reuse of the cave.

A rectangular door on the back wall, with a sill 30 cm high, leads to later *Cave 12a*, measuring 1.5×3.5 m, with a manger on the back wall. The entrance to the room, which belongs to the phase of reuse, was subsequently enlarged and a large hole was also made to the left of the door.

Cave 12a had originally been planned as a dark, inner sanctum (as shown by the decorated niche), but was left unfinished, without even carving the central niche. The post-monastic dwellers adapted it to their own needs in a series of works once the collapse of *Caves 12b* and *12c* let in daylight from the exterior.

Cave 13, Passage 13a (Fig. 21; Pls. XI.a, XVII.a)

This is an inaccessible cave, rectangular in plan, covered with a flattened parabolic vault, the front part almost completely collapsed. Two superimposed niches can be seen on the back wall, from the left side of which opens a passageway (*13a*), the entrance set aslant, showing that it leads to a lower room.

Back Side of the Massif

The collapse of the rock has been particularly serious at the back side of the massif. We came across a long,

wide corridor (about 4 m) forming a bend (Pls. XVII.b, XVIII.a), which, in the present state of preservation comes from and leads to nowhere. At the height of the bend, there was originally a large room, which was closed (Pl. XVII.b). A deep shaft opens in the ceiling of the corridor, allowing for the air and light to enter (Pl. XVIII.b). A foothold to climb up the shaft is to be noted.

2. Homāy Qal'a

Crossing the Zardālū pass and entering the Nāwa-ye Tamakī, you see in the distance, towards north-northwest, a sandstone formation exposed to violent wind erosion. This is the Kōh-e Homāy Qal'a, rising to a height of 2817 m (Pl. XIX). You leave the main Qarabāgh-Jāghūrī road less than 2 km after passing the fork for Nāy Qal'a and proceed on foot for about 2 km. The Rūd-e Bōsāna, which originates from Mount Dehbaday and flows to its left, has eroded the massif. The monastic caves were hewn out in one of the gorges, trapezoidal in shape, formed by erosion. The place is used by the nomads and peasants who till a few scrubby cornfields nearby.

The caves (Fig. 22) are situated at different levels and up to a considerable height of the three towering walls of the gorge, partly fallen down. The caves have been divided into groups: Group A to the left, Group B in the central wall and Group C on the right wall. The last two groups are the most ruined. From the caves seen in section and from the openings on the walls of the gorge, it appears that the caves were disposed in rows approximately at the same levels. They must have been connected by corridors and stairways, a thing which we

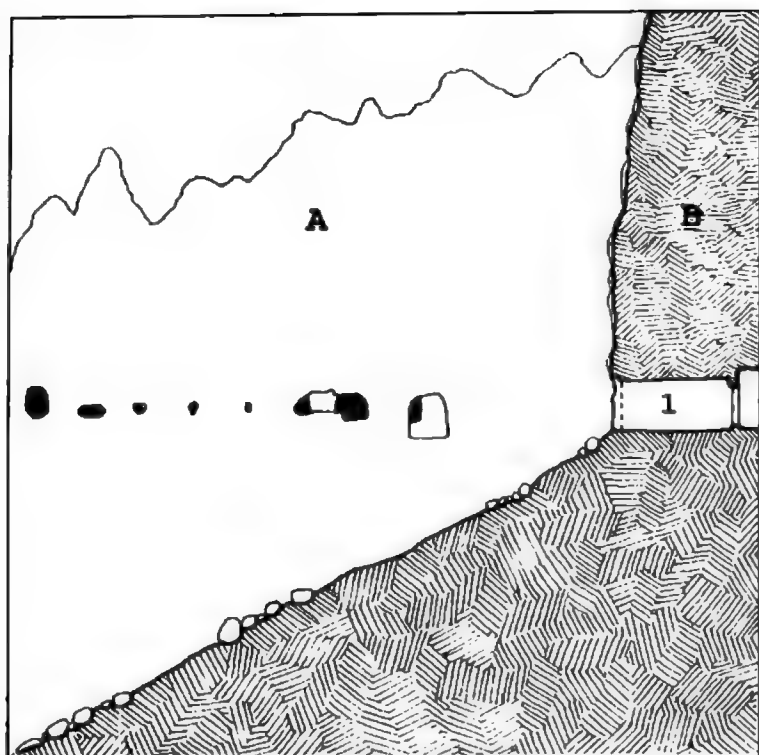


Fig. 23. Homāy Qal'a: prospect of Group A (sketch).

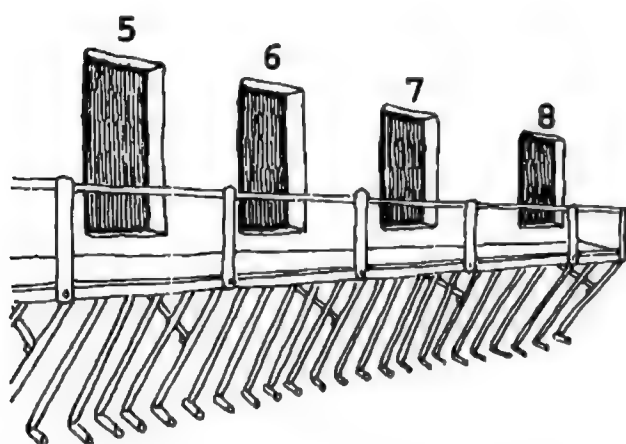


Fig. 24. Homāy Qal'a: proposed reconstruction of access to Caves 5-8.

effectively observed in Group C, which can be negotiated without equipment.

Group A (Fig 23; Pl. XX)

The caves of this group could not be visited. They are distributed on at least three levels. From the sections, it appears that some caves had slanting walls and flat ceilings.

Group B (Pls. XXI.a-XXII.b)

The level of the lower caves, which at present coincides with the walking level, is actually the same of the lower caves of Groups A and C. The collapses of the rock from above have accumulated up to a considerable height in this part of the gorge.

To the left, the rectangular entrance doors of *Caves 1-3* are visible. These rooms pertained to a larger

chamber, probably c. 12 m wide, whose front part and ceiling are completely collapsed but for a small portion still visible on the right. The existence of a *vihāra* could be suggested if we had some more evidence. After the collapses that destroyed the chamber, a roof supported by wooden beams was built along the wall, as is shown by the row of holes visible above the doors (Pl. XXII.a). There are holes also on the far left side of the central wall.

At the centre of the wall, a large room can be seen (*Cave 4*). It has an opening in the back wall, and two diaphragms on the left once separating three rooms one from the other.

The rectangular doors of *Caves 5-8*, crudely enlarged at the bottom, can be seen on the right. The holes in a row, at a distance of about 40 cm one from the other, are the slots for the brackets supporting a wooden balcony (Fig. 24). The caves could be entered only from the outside, and, as is also the case at Ghār-e Shāh, probably did not communicate one with the other.

Group C (Fig. 25; Pls. XXIII.a-XXIV.b)

Cave 9, Stairway 9a

The cave is rectangular and measures 5.5 × 3.5 m. A bench 1 m high and 0.5 m wide runs along the entire eastern wall, in which a few small niches open.

Consisting of four steps, *Stairway 9a* leads from *Cave 19* to *Cave 10*.

Caves 10, 10a

Cave 10 is rectangular, measuring 6.5 × 2.6 m and covered by a flat ceiling 2.5 m high. A small niche opens on the eastern wall. Irregularly shaped *Cave 10a*, with a low ceiling (1.5 m), clearly belonging to the phase of reuse, opens along the same wall. Along the northern wall an opening 50 cm higher than the floor of the main cave leads to *Passage 11*, and a shaft in the ceiling to *Stairway 12*.

Passage 11 (Fig. 25)

The passage is 0.75 m high and 0.7 m wide; it has a few badly preserved steps in the first segment, after which it descends steeply. It is obstructed at about 3 m from the entrance.

Stairway 12

This stairway could be reached from *Cave 10* only by means of a wooden or rope ladder. The first segment, of about 1 m, is a vertical shaft, square in section (0.7 m), with two footholds along two sides to allow for climbing. After the first segment it becomes a stairway 1 m high consisting of eleven steps and turning right. The particular form of this passage-stairway was clearly meant for defensive purposes. *Cave 10* was, in origin, totally dark, and the shaft could hardly be detected. The stairway leads to *Caves 13-14*.

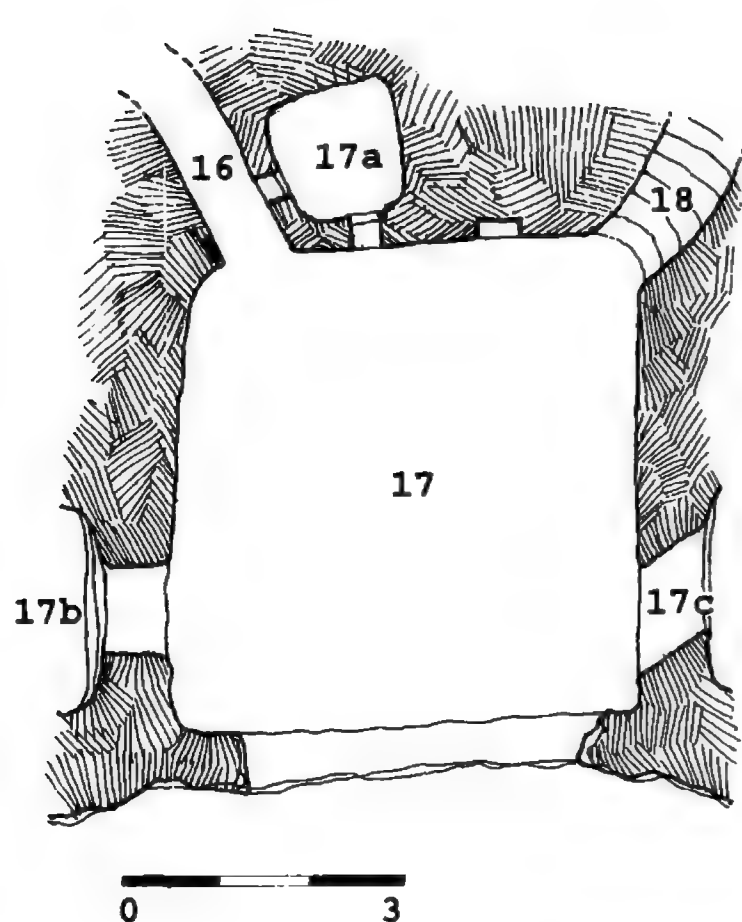


Fig. 26. Homāy Qal'a, Cave 17: plan and section (section not to scale).

Caves 13-14

These are two small rectangular caves about 2 m long and 1.6 m high, with flat ceilings. They are connected by a door 80 cm high whose threshold is 50 cm higher than the floor. These caves, which had no openings towards the exterior, probably pertain to the original monastery, and goods to be hidden and defended were certainly stored there.

Cave 15

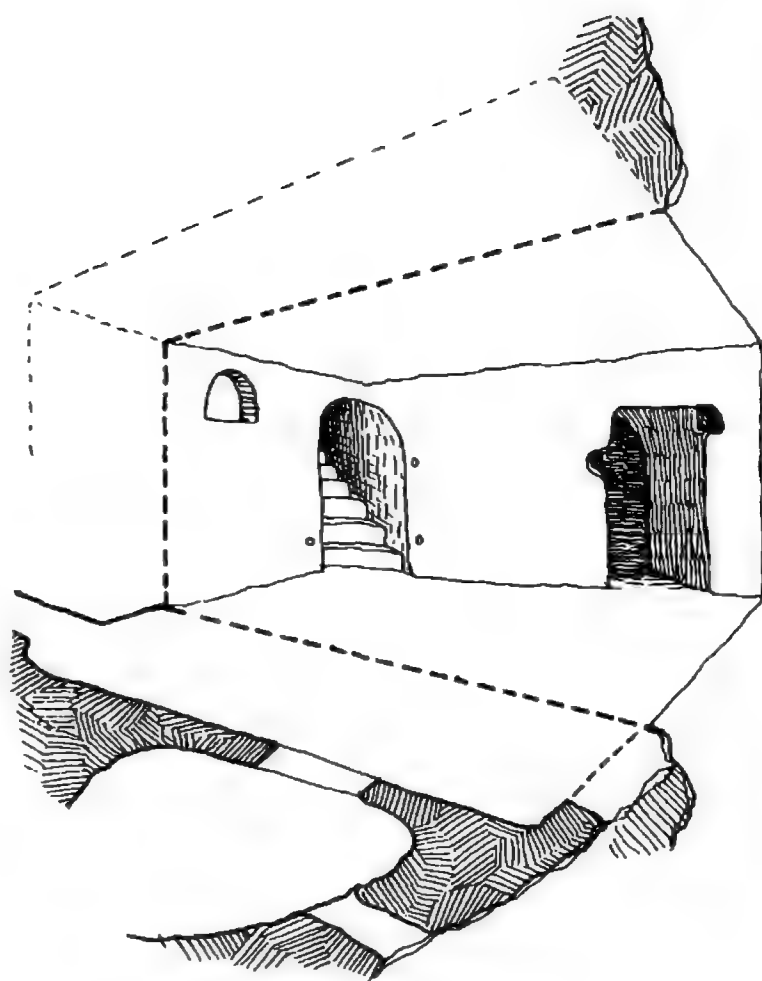
This cave has completely collapsed but for a wall and a small part of the ceiling, which was parabolic-vaulted. There are two niches on the surviving wall, with traces of red paint.

Corridor 16 (Pl. XXV)

This is a corridor starting from a collapsed area south of Cave 19, and leading to Cave 17. It is 13 m long, and forms a few bends; it is 2 m high. During a phase of reuse, four small irregularly shaped rooms (16a-c) were excavated. Openings 16e and 16f were made to let some light and air in from outside. Their irregular shape suggests that they also belong to the re-occupation phase.

Caves 17, 17a, 17b (Fig. 26; Pl. XXVI)

Cave 17 is a quadrangular room measuring c. 5 × 5 m, 2.3 m high. The ceiling is flat. It is the best preserved room of the Group, although the outer wall has collapsed. In the back wall is a small niche as well as a



roundish opening made to give light to Cave 17a, which pertains to a phase of reuse. The entrance to Stairway 18 on the right end of the wall is the companion to the outlet of Corridor 16 on the left side. Both sidewalls contain a rectangular doorway leading to smaller rooms (Caves 17b, 17c), also pertaining to a phase of reuse.

The — larger — room to the left (Cave 17b) is trapezoidal in section with two curvilinear sides, and receives light from the exterior through a small opening. It is entered through a door with a sill 0.5 m high. The door leading to Cave 17c has slots for a wooden beam.

The sides of all the accesses to the main cave are pierced through with holes, which were probably meant to fix mats or curtains used as doors.

Stairway 18 (Pl. XXVII)

This stairway connects Cave 17 to Cave 19. It turns left forming a sharp bend. It is 0.6 m large and is covered by a parabolic vault.

Caves 19, 19a, 20 (Fig. 27; Pl. XXVIII)

Cave 19 measures 5.7 × 1.8 m, and is covered by a parabolic-vaulted ceiling over 3 m in height, fully preserved on the entrance side. The rest of the ceiling has collapsed on the southeast side. A small niche opens on the eastern wall near the outlet of Stairway 18. A door on the right wall leads to small Cave 19a.

Underneath Corridor 16 there is a chapel (Cave 20) with the front part collapsed, a rectangular door broken through, and a small niche.

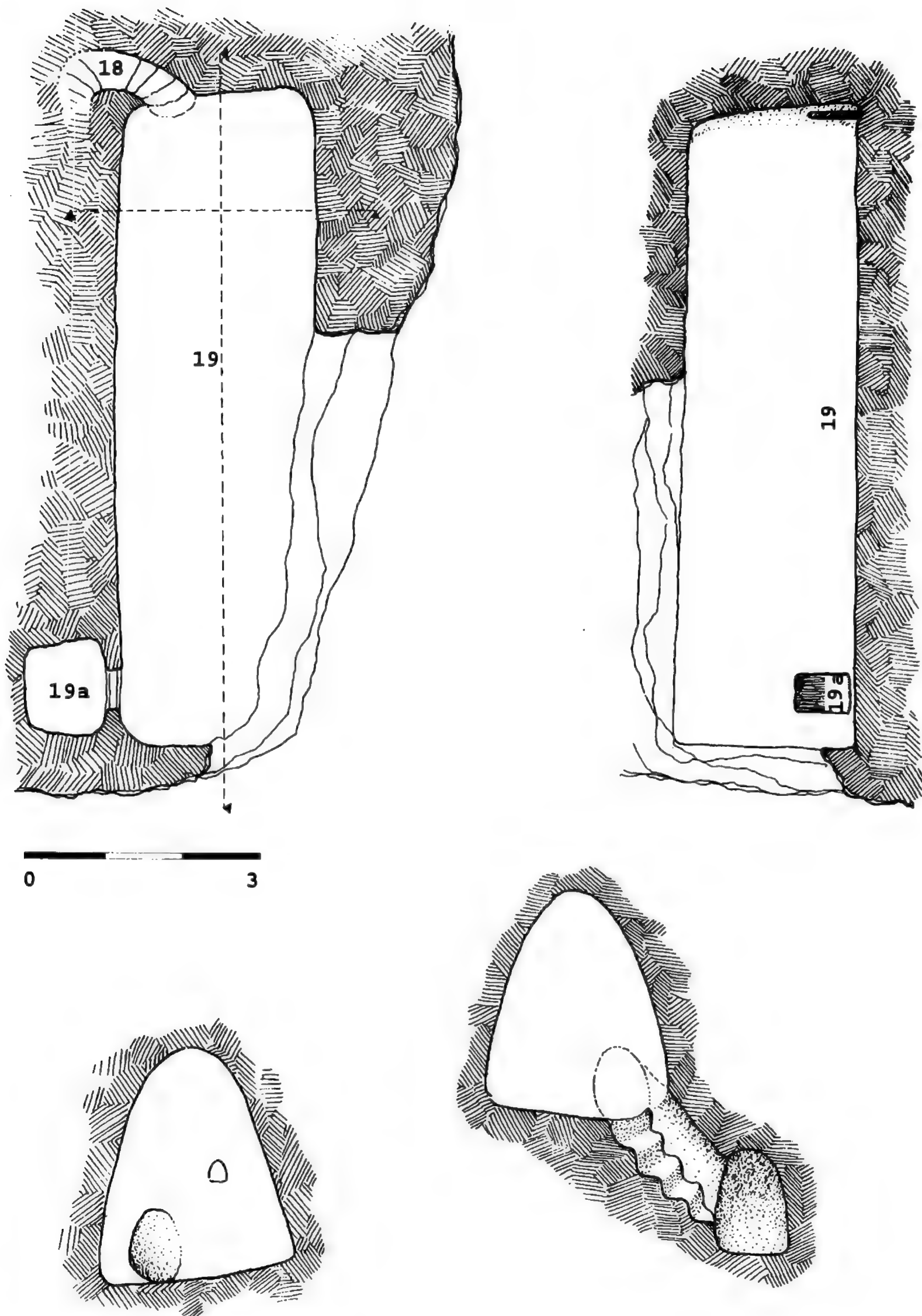
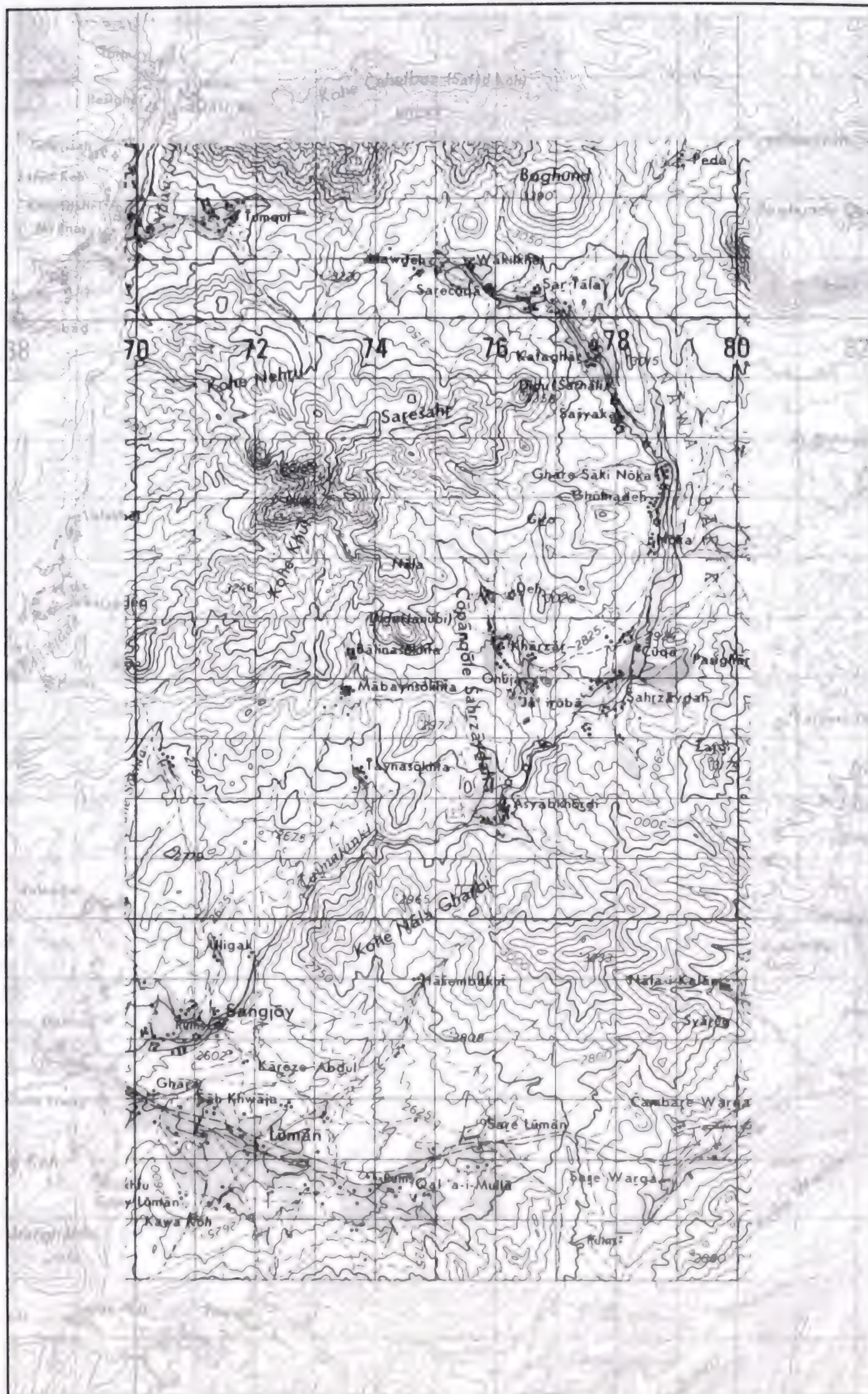


Fig. 27. Homāy Qal'ā, Caves 19, 19a: plan and sections.



Scale 1:100,000

Fig. 28. Map showing the Tayna Tangi river valley east of the Kōh-e Khūd and the area of Lūmān (bottom).

The Caves along the Tayna Tangī /Daryā-ye Gawargīn (Fig. 28)

The Tayna Tangī river, which originates to the west of Mount Dehbaday and is known upstream as Daryā-ye Gawargīn, is a left tributary of the Arghandāb, flowing in at Jāghūrī. Six groups have been located along its course. Tapa Sanawbar, the most important, is near Lūmān, along with Shāh Khwāja. Kōh-e Ēl and Ghār-e Shāh are not far off, on the way to Ghūjūr, to the right. Shākī Nōka and Gawargīn are situated upstream along the valley not very far from the source of the river.

South of Shākī Nōka the existence of an important site, Shāhrzāyda, was reported to us, approachable from a path leaving the main track before crossing the Dasht-e Dehbaday. Other cave groups we heard about are those of Chupan Qōl, Sōkhta and Tana Ghār.

3. Tapa Sanawbar

The site (Fig. 29; Pl. XXIX.a), also known as Khāna-ye Lūmān, is situated directly on the main route, 1.5 km from Bāzār-e Lūmān. The caves were inhabited in 1976, but given their very bad state of repair, new structures had been built over them, sometimes incorporating them. The old chapels were used mostly for keeping hay or for storage. The lower part of the sandstone formation, completely eroded, is cut through by the present Lūmān-Jāghūrī road. The complex includes some of the most monumental caves of the whole region, and must have attracted patronage because of its favourable location in an area readily accessible from all quarters. Three caves have been documented, at least partly.

Bivar had visited the site in 1962, this being the only Buddhist cave complex he described. We quote Bivar's description below because it includes a part of the site

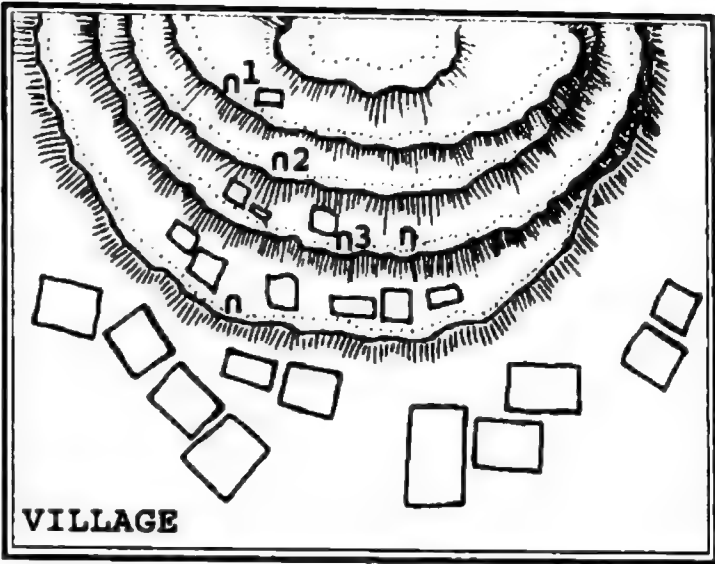


Fig. 29. Tapa Sanawbar: sketch plan with visited.

not visited by us and contains some valuable information, especially regarding the existence of a domed cave with squinches, to be seen nowhere else in the region.

Caves 1, 1a (Fig. 30; Pls. XXXI.a-XXXII.b)

Cave 1 is rectangular in shape, 8.5 m long in its present state of conservation. The whole front portion is lost. At present, it is 5 m wide at the opening and 4 m at the back, rising to a height of 6 m. At a height of about 4 m, a string course with a double indentation showing somewhat sharp angles marks the start of the barrel vault, narrowing the space to be covered. The angles, as well the surface of the vault, were carefully carved using a pointed chisel, while the sidewalls received rather hastier treatment.

In the right-hand wall of the cave there is a small, raised door leading to a small room at the side (Cave 1a). In the back wall there is a rectangular niche (1.3 × 0.7 m), probably obtained reworking the original one. Two more niches open on the side walls.

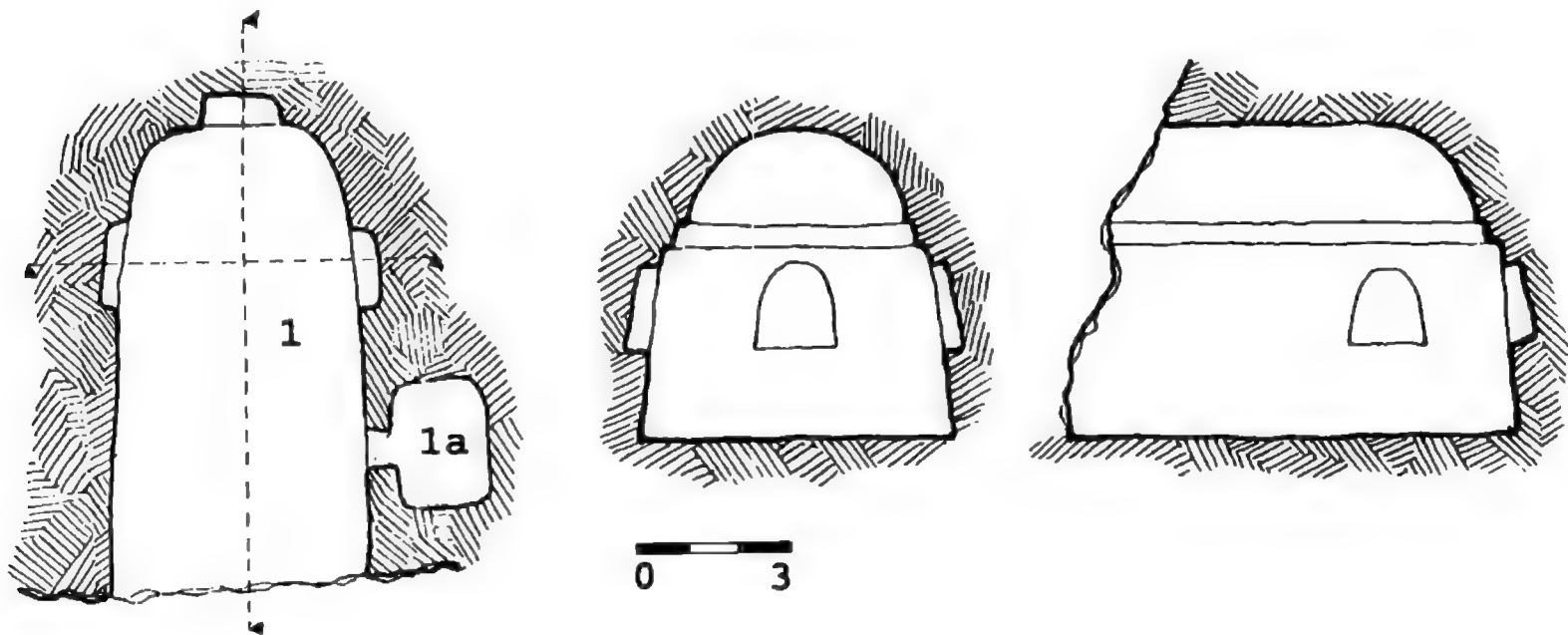


Fig. 30. Tapa Sanawbar. Caves 1, 1a: plan and sections.

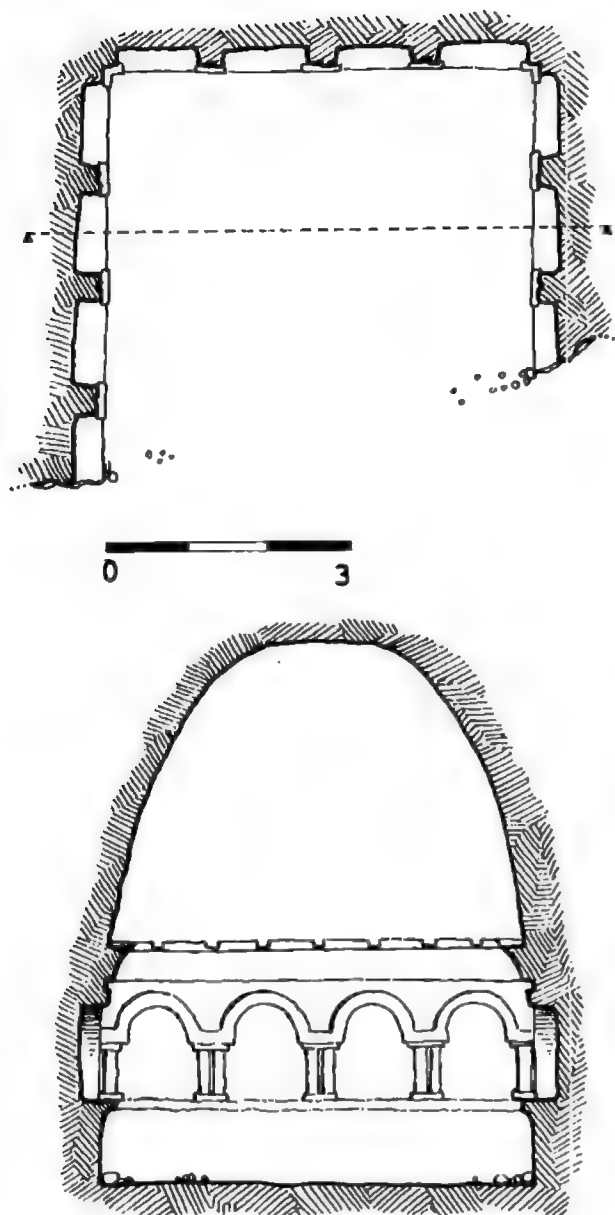


Fig. 31. Tapa Sanawbar, Cave 2: plan and section.

Cave 2 (Figs. 31-33; Pls. XXXIII.a-XXXV.b)

This cave is square in plan, each side measuring 5.2 m, and is covered by a corbelled dome. Four niches separated by fluted half-pillars surmounted by a lintel can be seen on the back wall. The holes for fitting wooden tenons supporting clay or stucco images are visible in two of them. The half-pillars once supported an entablature, traces of which are also visible on the much-eroded left sidewall, where the remains of a niche near the corner with the back wall are noted. It is highly probable that the sidewalls bore the same decoration as the back wall.

The most significant traces of the original entablature survive on the back wall to the right. In fact, the upper part of a bovine head, characterized by curled tufts of hair can be made out (Pl. XXXIV.b; Figs. 32-33). A short, abutting segment is to be seen high up to the left of the head, and a longer, thicker one is discernible below. These are traces of a *boukephalion* and a portion of a garland. The poor condition of the decoration is mostly due to erosion, but also to deliberate chipping away, as is shown exactly in the portion now described.

A series of slots c. 10 cm high and 15 cm large are placed along the upper part of the entablature at regular

intervals and in relation with the niches below, penetrating its entire thickness and deep into the wall. Wooden brackets are likely to have been inserted there, supporting the upper, abutting part of a wooden cornice. Fig. 33 offers a tentative reconstruction of how the cave originally looked.

Three layers of plaster, made of clay and straw, still survive on the niches. There is no trace of lime or plaster of Paris. The early layer, directly applied on the rock, is 2-2.5 cm thick, and the other two are only 0.2-0.4 cm thick. None of them pertains to the original sanctuary, because even the early coat covers the fluted pilasters of the niches. The images which originally were in the niches had also been removed in this phase. However, the layers of plaster must have been applied when the room was still a place of worship, since it is improbable that any plaster was applied during the post-monastic phase of reuse, lasting up to the present time, and because the first coat still respects the form of the niches. This points to a rather long use of the room as a place of worship.

The fluted pilasters separating the niches are reminiscent of early Gandharan pilasters, but are short and squat, and not tapering, pointing to a later date. At Fondūqistān, a site later than Tapa Sanawbar (below) the pilasters of the stone *stūpa* are equally short, although lacking the central flutes (cf. Hackin, Carl & Meunié 1959: figs. 147-148).

The *boukephalion* and garland motif is not attested in any known monument of Afghanistan or Gandhāra, but its presence is not surprising. It is in fact typical of Asia Minor and the Greek East, where it took the place of the earlier *boukranion*⁽¹⁵⁾. Among the earliest examples, those from Pergamon (temple of Athena Polias Nikephoros and temple of Caracalla; cf. Bohn 1885: pls. 29-31; 1896: pls. 34, 38, 41-43) and Aigai in Mysia (temple of Apollon Chresteros; Id. 1889: figs. 57-58) may be recalled. The *boukephalion* and garland decoration became particularly popular in Syria: see the architrave of the temple of Slēm in Auranitides (Butler 1915: pls. 26-27, fig. 320 on p. 357), that of the tomb of Tiberius Claudius Sosandros at Bshindelāyā (de Vogüé 1865-77: pls. 92, 92 bis) and that of the northern basin at Ba'albek-Heliopolis (Wiegand 1921-25, I: pls. 109-114). The *boukephalion* represented in the latter example comes particularly close to that at Tapa Sanawbar in virtue of the tufts of fur on the forehead⁽¹⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁵⁾ On the question *boukranion/boukephalion*, see Börker 1975.

⁽¹⁶⁾ It may be of some interest to remind the reader of a terracotta fragment with two *boukephalia* from the *stūpa* of Mīrpur Khās in Sind (Cousens 1929: fig. 9 on p. 88; Chandra 1959-62: fig. 12a; Verardi 1981: pl. VIb). Actually, they have little in common with the *boukephalia* from Tapa Sanawbar, although near to them in time (Mīrpur Khās is dated to the late 5th century, Huntington 1985: 205, and may be later; for the chronology of Tapa Sanawbar, see below). The debts that the artistic output of Mīrpur Khās has with the art of Gandhāra have been underlined on several occasions, but in this case the transmission of the *boukephalos* motif seems to have rather taken place via South Arabia. Cf. Verardi (1981: 267-68).

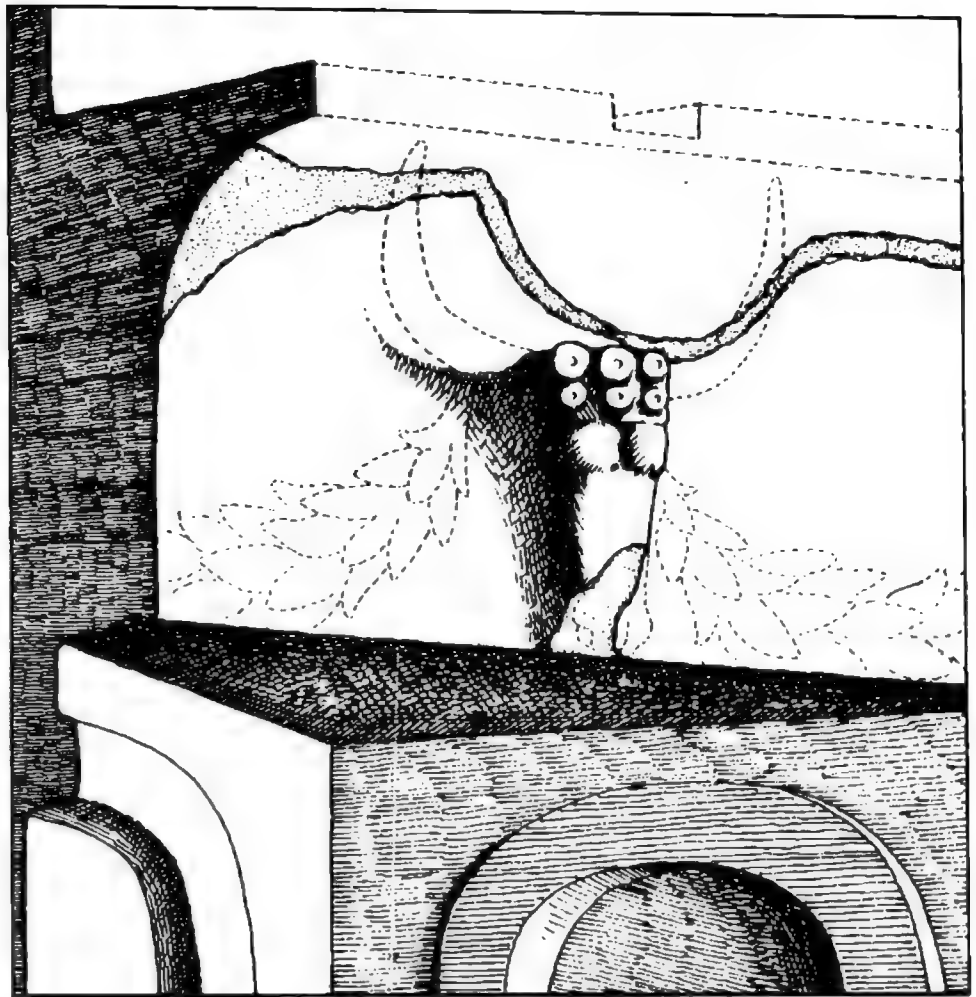


Fig. 32. Tapa Sanawbar, Cave 2: reconstruction.

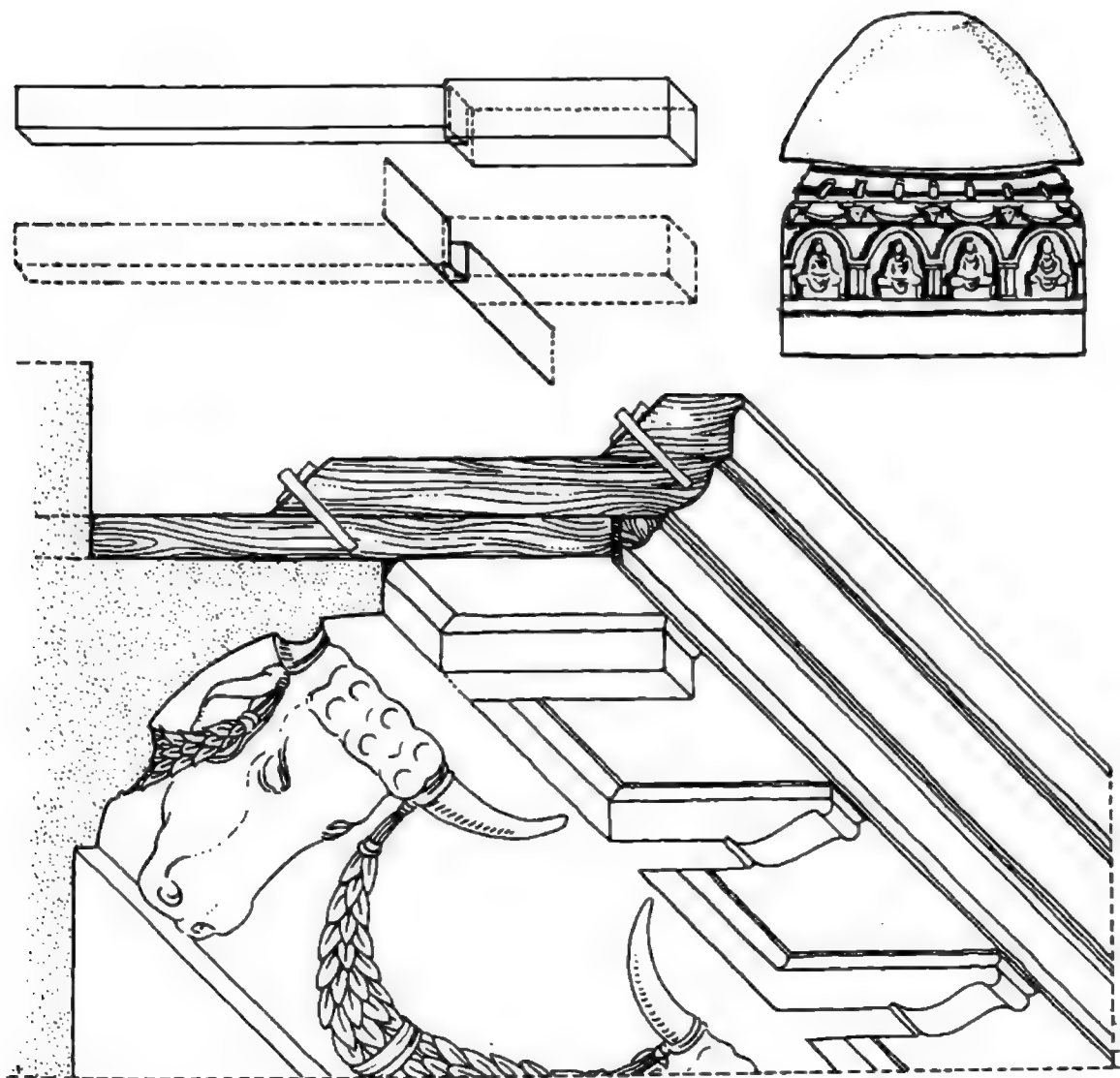


Fig. 33. Tapa Sanawbar, Cave 2: reconstruction.

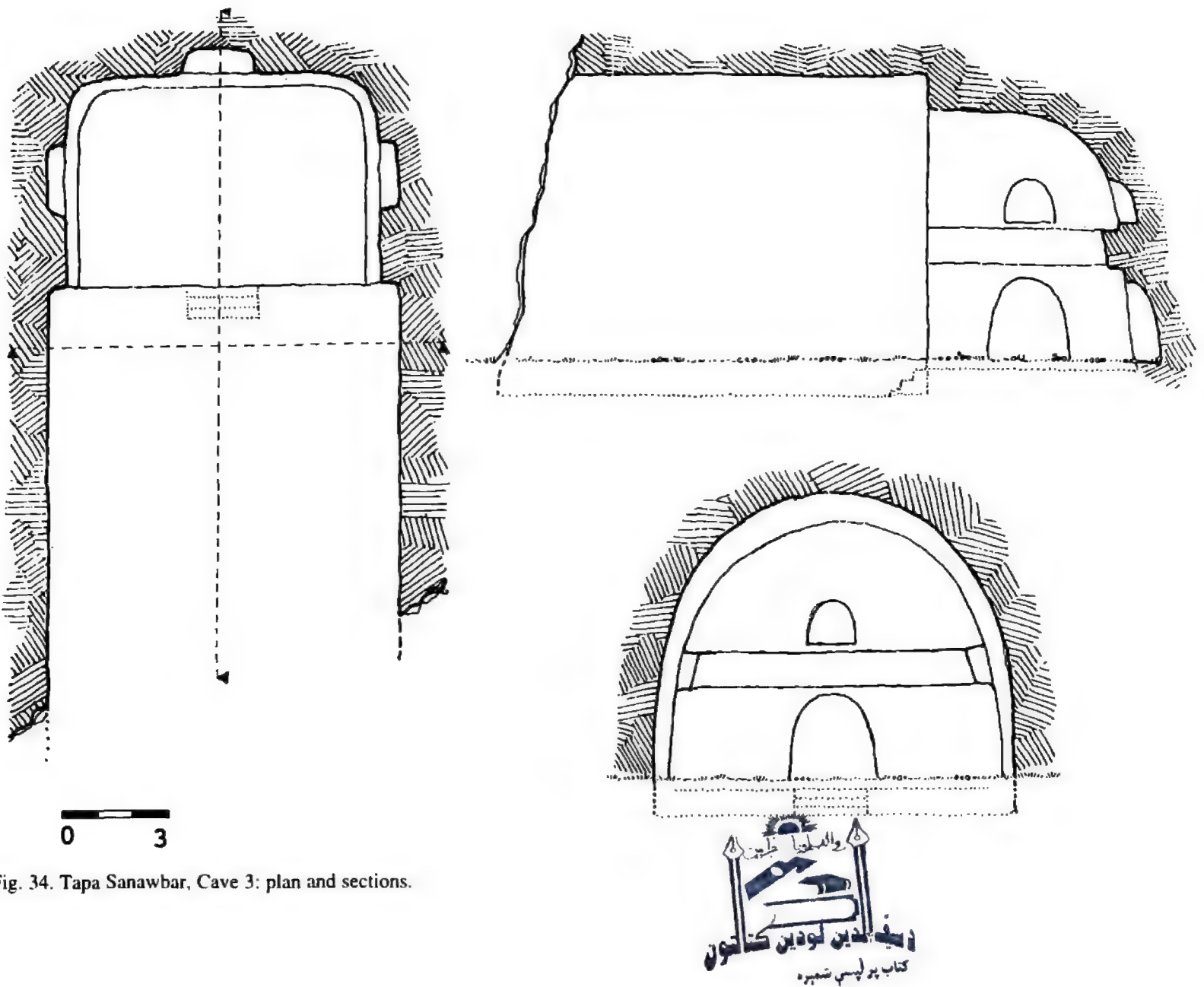


Fig. 34. Tapa Sanawbar, Cave 3: plan and sections.

Cave 3 (Fig. 34; Pl. XXXVI)

This is probably the largest of the caves we visited in the Jāghūrī and Qarabāgh districts, with the exception of those of Tapa Zaytūn, but its size cannot be determined with precision because the front is partly collapsed. The other measurements were also difficult to take because the cave was being used as a storage room at the time of our visit, and we certainly failed to take account of a number of details. The cave, whose total length is *c.* 20 m, consists of two parts. The first is a rectangular hall about 10 m large, covered by a parabolic vault 7-8 m high without any decoration. The second, 1 m narrower, is a sort of apse which was probably accessed by means of a few steps. Three large niches starting from the present floor level open on the back and side walls, and three more niches, smaller in size, open in the upper part of the room, separated from the lower one by a string course creating a certain constriction between the lower part of the cave and the barrel vault.

Bivar's report on his visit to Tapa Sanawbar runs:

At the approach to the village of Lomān [...] the road makes a sharp turn to the left in front of a conspicuous limestone dome some 25 feet in height. Inspection showed that it had been cut off from the ridge of high ground lying to the north by an artificial fosse. It was evident that this dome, though

weathered and deteriorated in places, was a monument of the rock-cut stupa type, with the fosse providing a path for circumambulation. The limestone of the dome is honey-combed with caves, and the main group of these are inhabited by villagers, who have walled up unwanted openings with mud-brick, and fitted doors. [...] Above the inhabited caves may be seen another group now used for the stabling of animals. One of these⁽¹⁷⁾ shows an architectural decoration, in the form of a blind arcade of three, approximately parabolic, arches⁽¹⁸⁾. Their form suggests a date fairly early in the Sasanian period, perhaps about the fourth century A.D. The walls of this cave have also a number of significant recesses. One, which is rectangular, gives no obvious indication of its purpose, but the shape of another suggests that a Buddha figure was affixed there, its head occupying the circular indentation, and attached by a wooden peg driven into the hole indicated by the pointing finger [in pl. 6].

The kindness of the residents of the lower caves made it possible also to examine their homes. Inside, the light was not sufficient for photography, but it was interesting that the roof of one of the chambers was provided with plain squinches, similar to those in the monastery at Haibak⁽¹⁹⁾, and in several caves at Bāmiyān⁽²⁰⁾. The more complicated architectural

⁽¹⁷⁾ It corresponds to our Cave 2.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Bivar refers in a note to Godard & Hackin (1928: pl. 32a).

⁽¹⁹⁾ Reference is here to Foucher (1942-47, I: pl. 27*r* [Cave 3]).

⁽²⁰⁾ Reference is to Godard & Hackin (1928: 31) and to Hackin & Carl (1933), but with some mistakes.

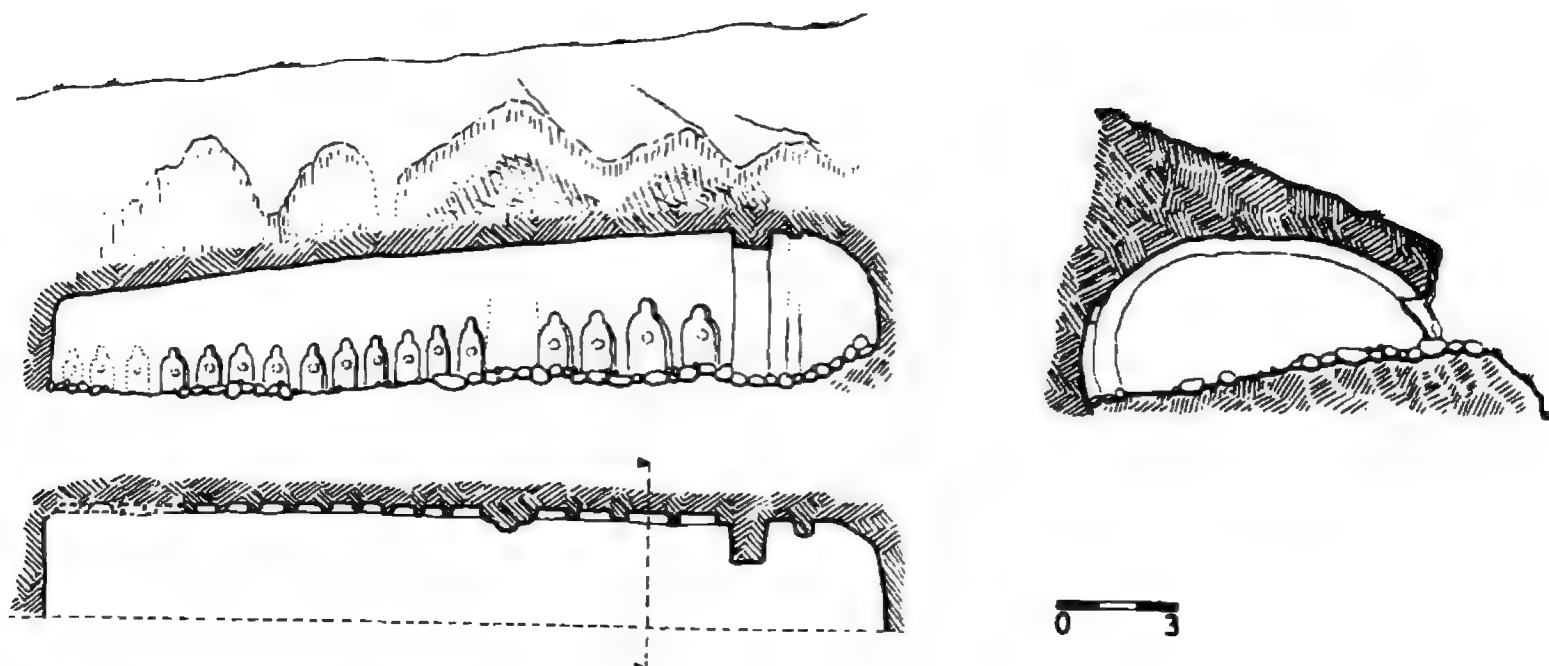


Fig. 35- Shāh Khwāja, Cave 1: plan and section.

features, for example lantern vaults, found in some of the later caves at Bāmiyān were not present here. Some general deductions are therefore possible as to the date of these caves. [...] their fairly simple architectural decoration suggests a date towards the end of the Kushan period, or early in the epoch of the Sasanians; that is to say, in the third century A.D., or early in the fourth. The inhabited caves seem to be earlier in date than those now occupied by the animals.

Inquiries made from the occupants as to the possible existence of painted frescoes, further architectural decoration, inscriptions, or fragmentary documents from the débris of cave-floors produced negative replies. (Bivar 1971: 85-86).

4. Shāh Khwāja

The site (Pl. XXXVII.a) is composed of a group of three *tapas* situated either right by the roadside after passing the Bāzār-e Lūmān bound to Ghūjūr and the town of Jāghūrī or at a very short distance, to the left. Common red pottery is found all over the area.

The highest and innermost of the three *tapas* is a small sandstone formation where several caves were hewn out, now for the most part filled in.

At the summit of the *ropa* there are a few mud-brick structures (Pl. XXXVIII.b, c), probably a passageway. The walls are made of *pakhsā*, but the two upper courses are made of mud bricks to facilitate work on the start of the vault. This is the same system documented in room 53 at Tapa Sardār and in the monastery at Gul Dara (Fussman & Le Berre 1976: 37-38, figs. 40-41). At the northern end of the passageway two vaulted passages lead off from the corners to one or more rooms, now filled in.

Cave 1 (Fig. 35; Pls. XXXVII.b, XXXVIII.a)

The largest cave is situated at the bottom at the centre of the formation, and is filled up almost to the ceiling. On a side wall there is a row of small niches, at the centre

of which there are holes meant for tenons once supporting images. It is likely that other rows of niches are present below the row still visible.

This is likely to be a cave of the 'Thousand Buddhas', a very common iconography which we know best from the Wei period onwards in China. There are no other examples in Afghanistan of caves or structural *vihāras* with Buddha images in small, plain niches such as these, but painted ovals where stucco images were fitted are known from Bāmiyān, as for instance in the ceiling of Cave 164 (Pl. CIX.a) corresponding to the *salle de réunion* of Hackin & Carl's Group C (Hackin & Carl 1933: 7, pls. VII-VIII). *Vihāra* 17 at Tapa Sardār (Taddei & Verardi 1978: 82 ff.) and such monumental chapels as Caves 625 and 626 at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pls. 156-158) are also referable to the same iconography⁽²¹⁾, but within a decorative setting not only different from, but much richer than the example under examination.

5. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka

This small group of caves (Fig. 36) is located on the left bank of the Daryā-ye Gawargīn (Tayna Tangī river), not far from Bārik, on the other side of the river. It is approached from Tamakī after passing the Kōtal-e Zāwlī and the Dasht-e Dehbadai. Mount Dehbadai stands on the right side. Four caves (Pl. XXXIX) were visited which, at the time of our survey, had been used until very recently. Two open directly on the river, while the others are on an upper terrace immediately above.

⁽²¹⁾ Several other caves could be recalled at Bāmiyān, with many rows of decorated niches once containing Buddha images or with rows of painted Buddhas. An iconographic study of these chapels has never been attempted.

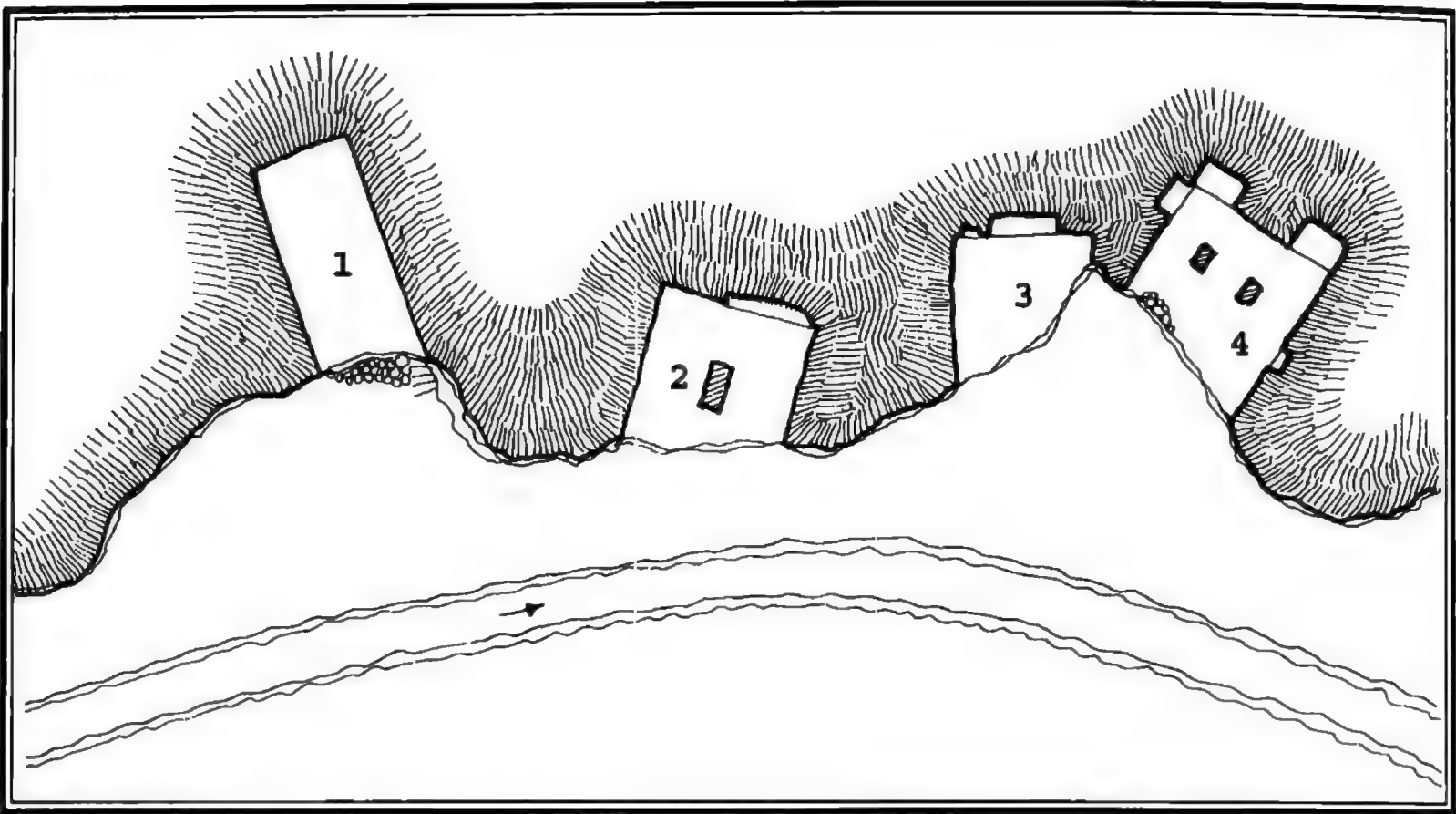


Fig. 36. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka: sketch plan.

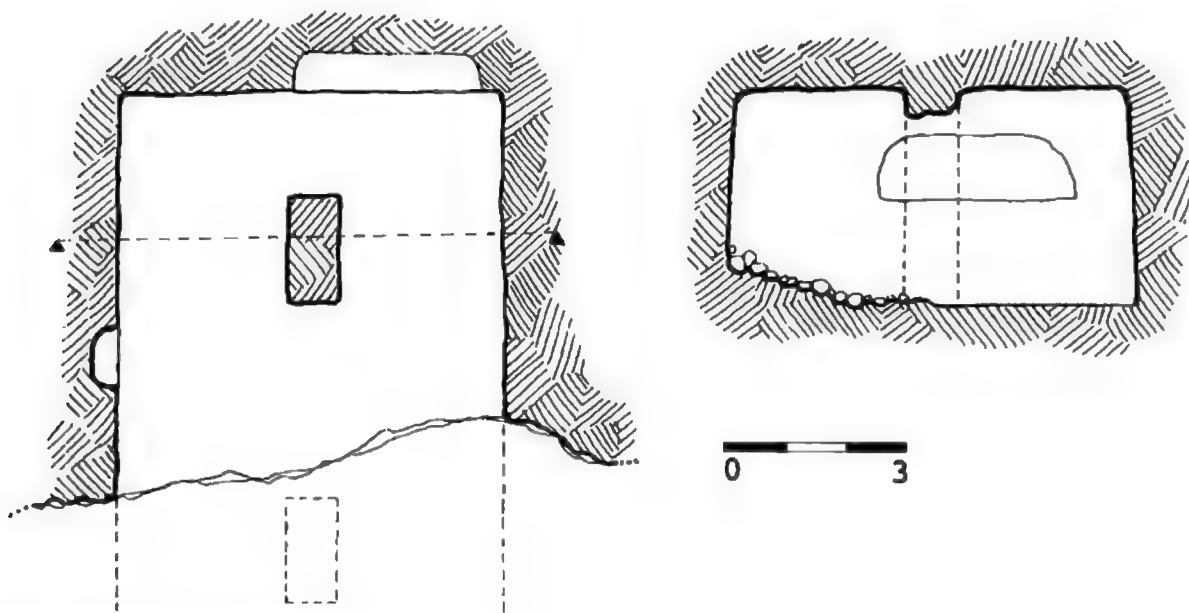


Fig. 37. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka, Cave 2: plan and section.

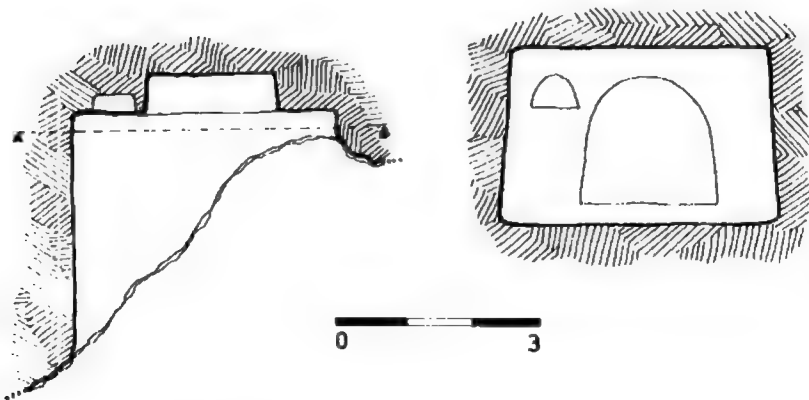


Fig. 38. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka, Cave 3: plan and section.

Cave 1 (Pl. XXXIX.a)

A large, rectangular cave covered with a parabolic vault, without any niche or decoration. The entrance is partly obstructed by a modern stone wall.

Cave 2 (Fig. 37; Pl. XL.a)

The cave is rectangular, with slightly slanting side walls, as in Cave 4. The ceiling is flat, and at its centre the upper part of a rectangular pillar is still extant, dividing the cave in two parts longitudinally.

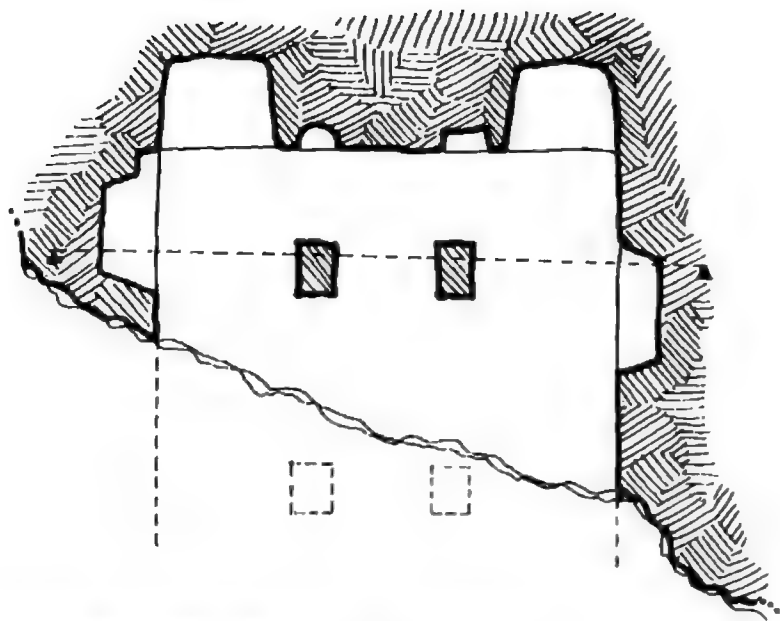


Fig. 39. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka, Cave 4: plan and section.

Another pillar probably stood in the front part of the cave. There is a low, rectangular niche on the back side, the upper corners rounded off, probably pertaining to the phase of reuse; another niche opens on the left sidewall.

Cave 3 (Fig. 38; Pl. XL.b)

This cave is rectangular in plan, with slanting walls and a flat ceiling. The front part has collapsed. There is a large niche at the centre of the back wall, starting from near the floor, and a smaller niche is found higher up on the wall to the left.

Cave 4 (Figs. 39-40; Pl. XLI)

A landslide has carried the front part of the cave away, but it seems that it was rectangular in plan, with slightly slanting side walls. The capitals of two square pillars once standing in the rear portion of the cave are still visible on the flat ceiling. The capital of one pillar can be seen, worked on the front and rear sides and composed of a torus and abacus. It is probable that there were two more pillars in the front part of the room, forming a small pillared hall. At the ends of the back wall there are two large niches starting from near the present floor, at the side of which two other, small niches belonging to the phase of reuse also open. Two more small niches are found on the side walls. One of them has been reworked.

No other cave sanctuary of this kind is known from Afghanistan or Xinjiang, with the exception of a cave at Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl in this very region (below), and reference should be made to Indian pillared halls or *maṇḍapas*, even if no examples are available in the nearby regions of Pakistan, and examples from present-day India are too generic to be of any help in understanding where these architectural models were introduced from. The two large niches on the back wall can be compared with similar niches in Cave 1 at Sangdara (Figs. 60-61).

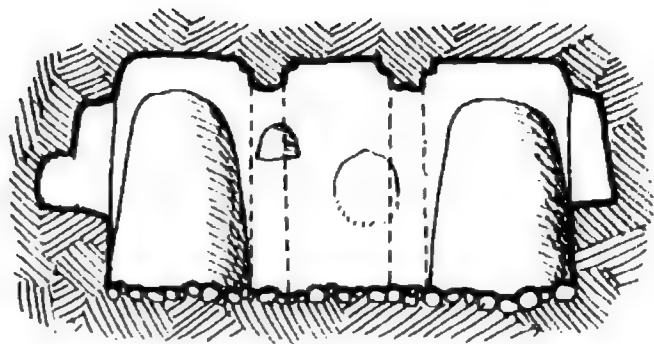
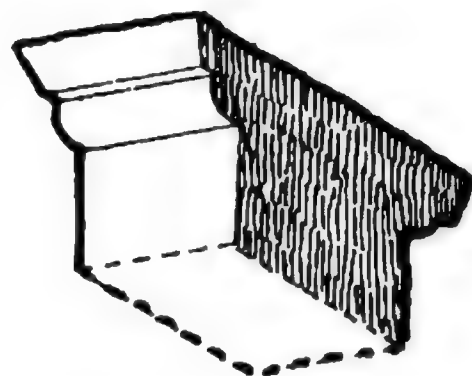


Fig. 40. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka, Cave 4: reconstruction of capital (sketch).



6. Gawargīn

The site (Fig. 41; Pls. XLIII, XLIV.a) is named after the nearby village, and is reached proceeding upstream from Shākī Nōka for 5 km. Daryā-ye Gawargīn is also the name given to the Tayna Tangī in this point. This group is situated at the very beginning of the valley, which is closed to the north by the Safīd Kōh (Kōh-e Chehel Boz). Following the river upstream from Shākī Nōka, you skirt a few sandstone formations, one of which, hewn out with artificial caves, could not be visited (Pl. XLII).

The caves of Gawargīn are hewn out of a massif that rises sheer above the river. The caves were subdivided into three groups (A, B, C) along the southern side of the massif. Of these, only a few caves of Groups A and B could be visited and partly documented. They appear to have been largely reorganized during the post-monastic phase.

Group A (Pl. XLIV.b)

Collapse of the rock allowed access to two caves in this part of the massif. They were reused and long inhabited after the Buddhist community left.

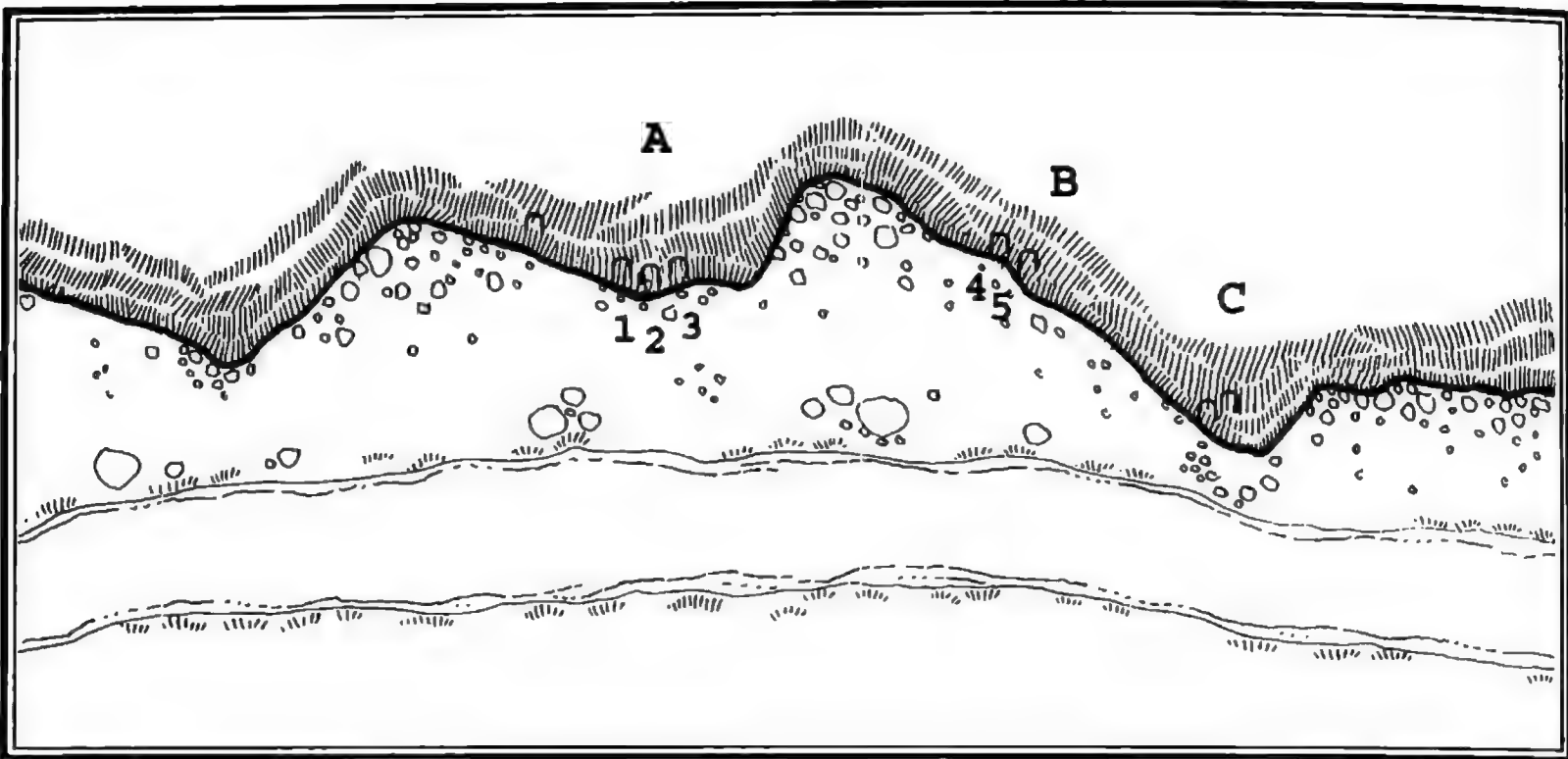


Fig. 41. Gawargin: scheme with position of the caves.

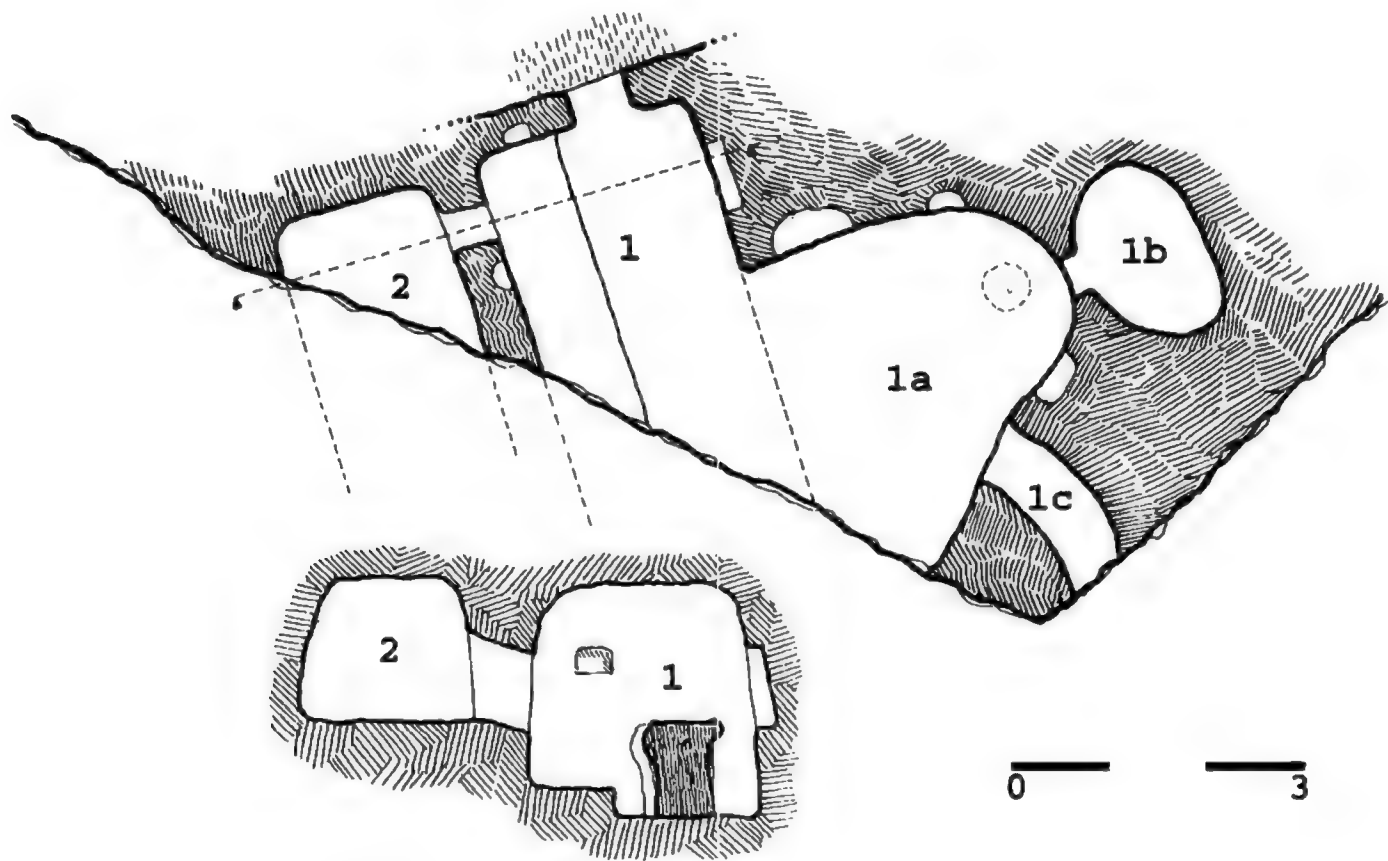


Fig. 42. Gawargin, Caves 1-2: plan and section.

Caves 1, 1a, 1b, Corridor 1c (Fig. 42; Pls. XLV.a, XLVI.b)

Cave 1 is rectangular, but its original size cannot be calculated due to the collapse of the front part. The ceiling is flat. It has a large, squarish niche on the right side wall, at 60 cm from the ground, clearly belonging to the phase of reuse. There is a bench, 30 cm high, along the left side wall, in which an opening measuring c. 0.40

× 0.3 m gives onto Cave 2, whose access was from the outside. It is probable that the passage was obtained by breaking the bottom of a niche in Cave 2 and regularizing the hole. A door with slots for a wooden lintel in the back wall gives access down a couple of steps to a large, unexplored room.

Cave 1a is very peculiar in plan, at least at present, due to works largely carried out during the phase of reuse. There are two small niches on the left sidewall, probably pertaining to the post-monastic phase. The

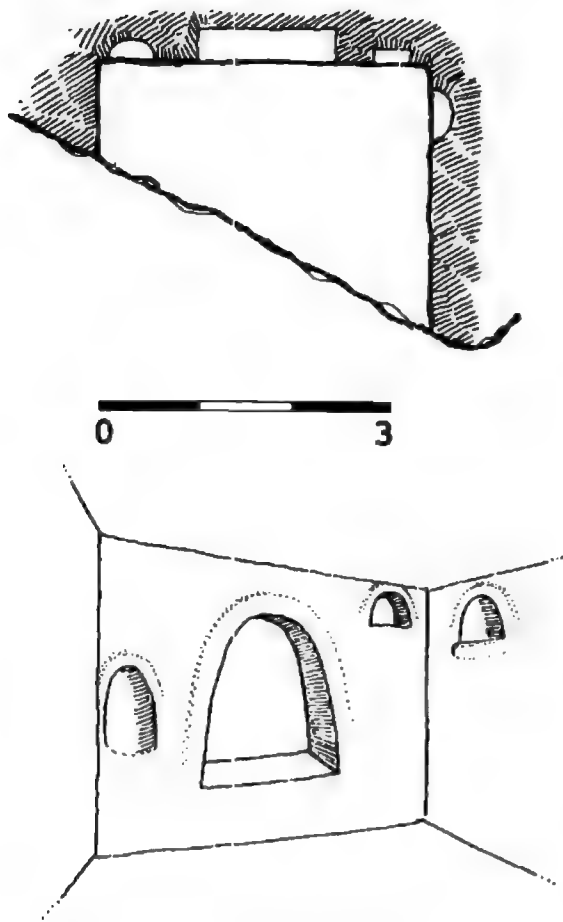


Fig. 43. Gawargin, Cave 3: plan and prospect.

niche on top is roundish, the niche below rectangular. The back wall was irregularly rounded, and an opening at the corner with the right sidewall gives access to small *Cave 1b*, whose floor is 30-40 cm lower than that of the main room. On the right wall of *Cave 1a* there is a small trapezoidal niche at a height of about 45 cm from ground level. *Corridor 1c*, rectangular in section but rounded off, opens on this side, turning slightly to the right. Its outer portion has collapsed. A round opening in the flat ceiling led from *Cave 1a* to an upper room.

Large, irregular marks made with a pointed chisel, in sharp contrast with the careful working of the other caves, suggest that *Cave 1a* has always been used as a habitation.

Cave 2 (Fig. 42)

There is no access to this cave at present. It is rectangular in shape and covered by a parabolic, flat-tened vault.

Cave 3 (Fig. 43; Pl. XLVII.a-c)

This cave is located below *Cave 1a* and *Corridor 1c*. It was rectangular, with flat, carefully worked ceiling. The front part has collapsed. There is a large parabolic niche on the back wall, with clean-cut corners at the base. The small niche to the right on the same wall and that on the left have a flat base, while the niche to the left and the one on the right side wall had a sort of rounded bracket below. A band in relief, 10-15 cm wide, contours the upper part of all the niches, which had probably to be decorated with a geometrical pattern similar to that in *Cave 2* at Sangdara (Fig. 63, Pl. LXIV.b).

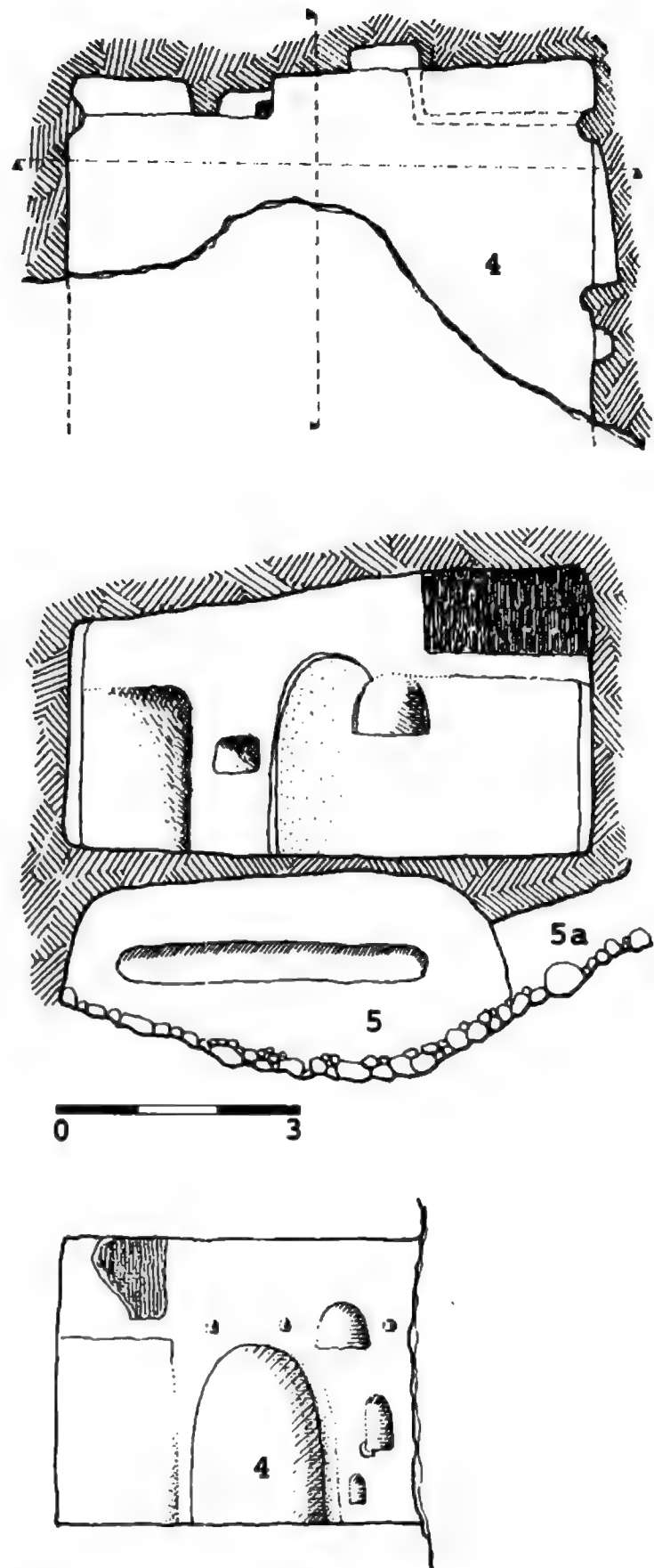


Fig. 44. Gawargin, Caves 4, 5: plan and prospect.

Group B (Pl. XLVIII.a)

The caves in this part of the massif were also inhabited for a long time after the monastic phase, and re-worked. Two of them could be visited.

Cave 4 (Figs. 44-45; Pls. XLVIII.b, XLIX.a)

Two building phases can be clearly made out. The original cave, of which only the back portion survives,

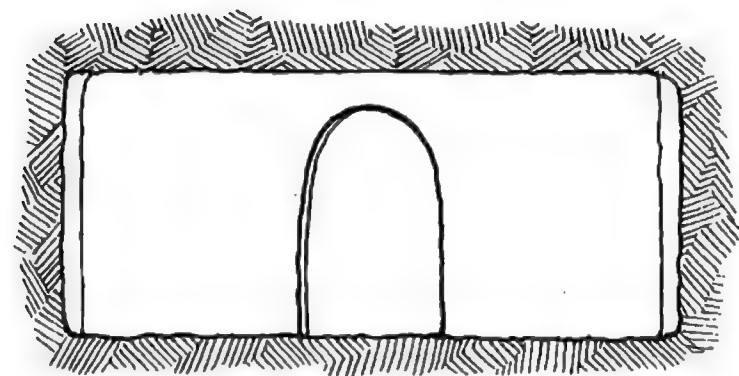
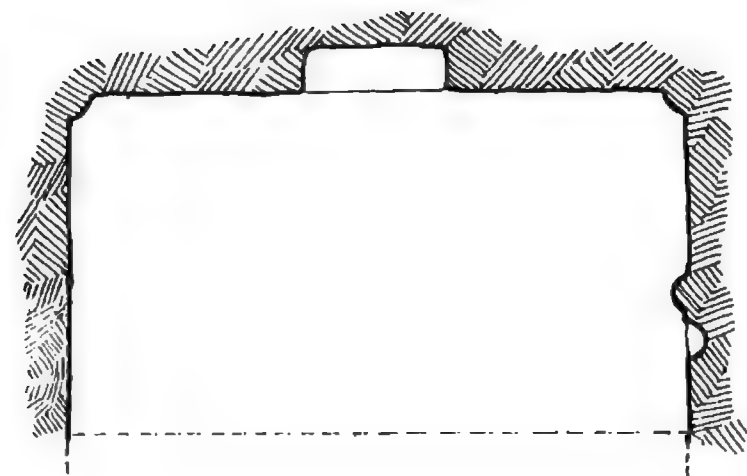


Fig. 45. Gawargīn, Cave 4: reconstruction.

was a large rectangular room covered by a flat ceiling with a large niche at the centre of the back wall. The chamber is likely to have been originally designed for worship.

Later on a half-pillar was created on the back wall (a small niche was also hewn out) by further excavating the rock to the left, and in the space so obtained a large rectangular niche was excavated. The right part of the central niche was demolished and a new corner was created, with an upper level in which opens a cavity for storage. A further niche was created within the original, larger niche. A door belonging to the early phase opened on the right side of the cave, but the work was soon interrupted. The small niche near it also seems to belong to the Buddhist phase.

Cave 5 (Fig. 44; Pl. XLIX.b)

This cave opens below *Cave 4*, and is filled with debris. It is trapezoidal in shape, with rounded off corners. Access is possible at present thanks to a great collapse of rock on the front side. *Corridor 5a*, probably belonging to a phase of reuse, leads to the cave from the right, from what is now the outside. The large, rectangular opening on the back wall, a manger, also belongs to a phase of reuse.

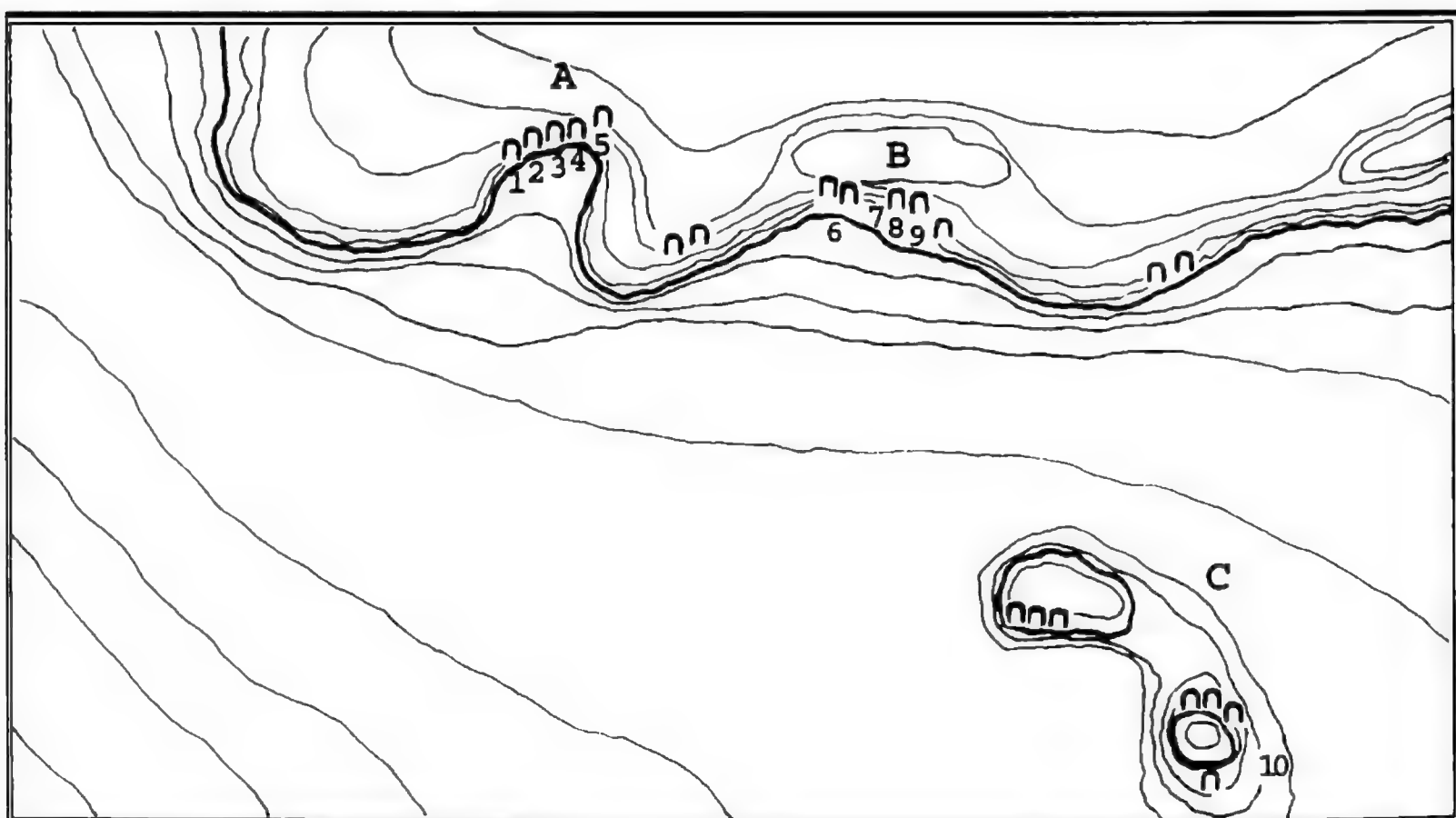


Fig. 46. Kōh-e Ēl: sketch plan.

7. Kōh-e Ēl

The sandstone massif is situated uphill from the Bēdēsē village in the Nāwa-ye Qalandarī, and looks west. The main caves are concentrated in the centre of the massif, and have been divided into Groups A, B and C (Fig. 46; Pl. L). Group C was not visited. A few caves are hewn out in an isolated formation in front of the massif (Group D).

Group A

This part of the complex is much compromised by the detachment of large blocks of rock, so that the majority of the caves are now visible only in section (Pl. LI). Only a few could be visited. The caves, with round or parabolic-vaulted ceilings, were designed for worship, as is shown by the presence of central niches and smaller ones for lamps or cult objects. Their position in the massif is shown in Fig. 47.

Only the back side wall remains of *Cave 1* (Pl. LII.a), once covered with a semi-circular vault. There is a lowered parabolic niche at the centre, with a small niche on the left.

Cave 2 (Pl. LII.b) and *Cave 3* (Fig. 48; Pl. LIII.a-c), not visible in the general photos, open at the ground level. The first is rectangular, with a flattened vault. It communicates with *Cave 3* through an opening c. 0.5 m high, being probably the left niche of *Cave 3* which has been broken through.

Cave 3 is rectangular about 8 m long, with slanting sidewalls and rounded ceiling. There is a niche on the back wall, c. 2 m long, and two others another one on the right-hand wall.

The front part of *Cave 4* is collapsed (Pl. LI.b). A large niche, about 2 m long, is visible on the back wall.

Cave 5, partly collapsed, was a large chapel covered with a parabolic vault, with a niche on the back wall, and another one on the left wall. There was a room at the entrance, to the left.

Group B (Pl. LIV.a)

Four caves were visited and can be described at some length. There is a large chapel at the ground floor; the upper rooms seem to have been dwellings for monks.

Caves 6, 6a, 6b (Figs. 49-50; Pl. LIV.b)

Cave 6 is a rectangular cave measuring 8×4 m covered by a flattened parabolic-vaulted ceiling. A large niche measuring $2.3 \times 2 \times 0.8$ m opens in the back wall, preceded by a large dais 0.7 m high and 2.2 m long. The upper part of the niche is outlined at the top by a slightly embedded arched lintel. A small niche is carved to the right of the main one.

The floor of the cave is broken through at the centre of the chamber. There probably was a stepped passage leading to the cave from a lower level, as at Nāy Qal'a (*Cave 11*) and Tapa Zaytūn (*Cave 23*).

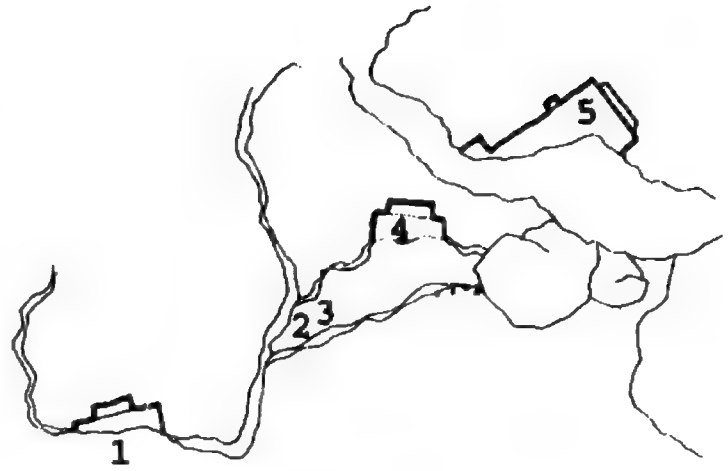


Fig. 47. Kōh-e Ēl, Group A: sketch plan.

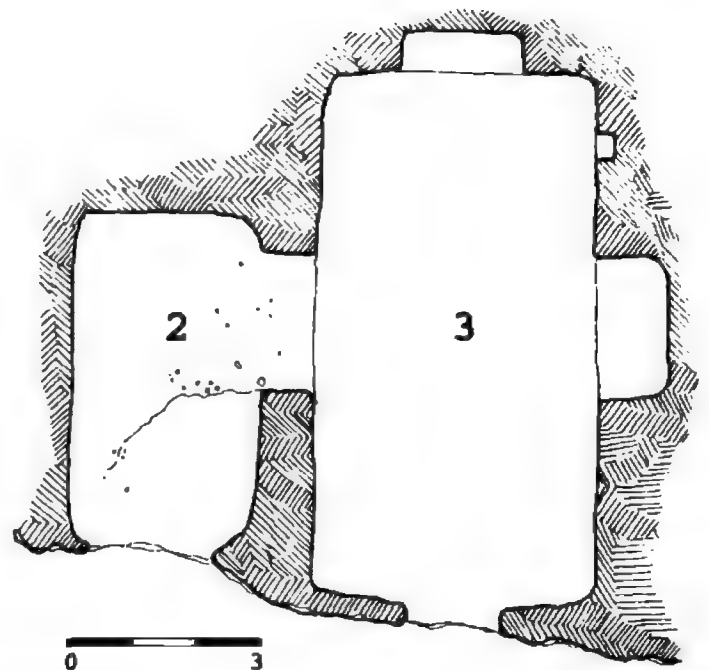


Fig. 48. Kōh-e Ēl, Caves 2, 3: plan.

Two openings near the corners of the back wall give access to *Caves 6a* and *6b*. The opening to *Cave 6a* on the left is c. 30 cm higher than the floor of the main cave, whose floor is also higher. There is a small niche on the right wall of this small room. The other opening is a rectangular door with slots for wooden lintels (Fig. 50). It leads to *Cave 6b*, which measures 4.5×2.6 m. The ceiling is flat, and 2.2 m high. This room may belong to the original cave. *Passage 6c* at the left of the entrance probably led to another side room.

Caves 7, 7a, 7b (Fig. 51; Pl. LV)

Cave 7 is a rectangular room measuring 7.5×4.5 m with a flat ceiling, partly collapsed at the front. The two cavities on the floor on the left side (0.75×0.5 m; 0.75×0.25 m), are probably referable to the post-monastic

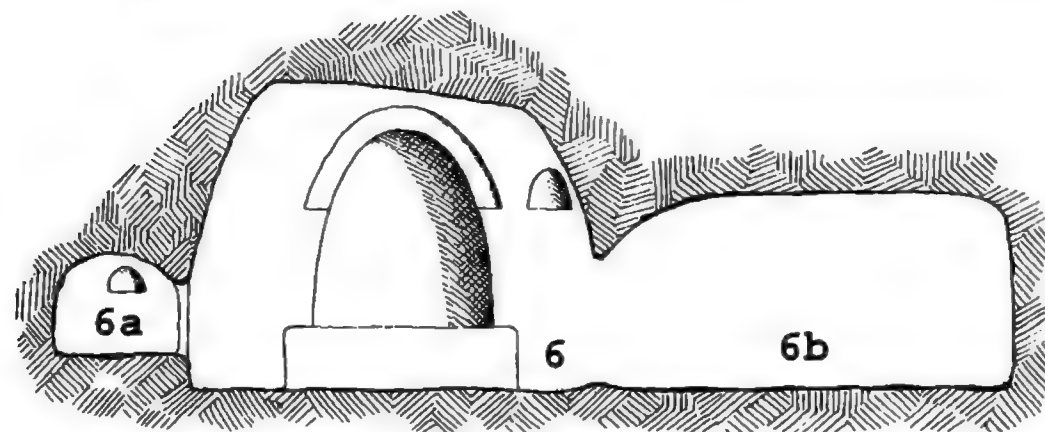
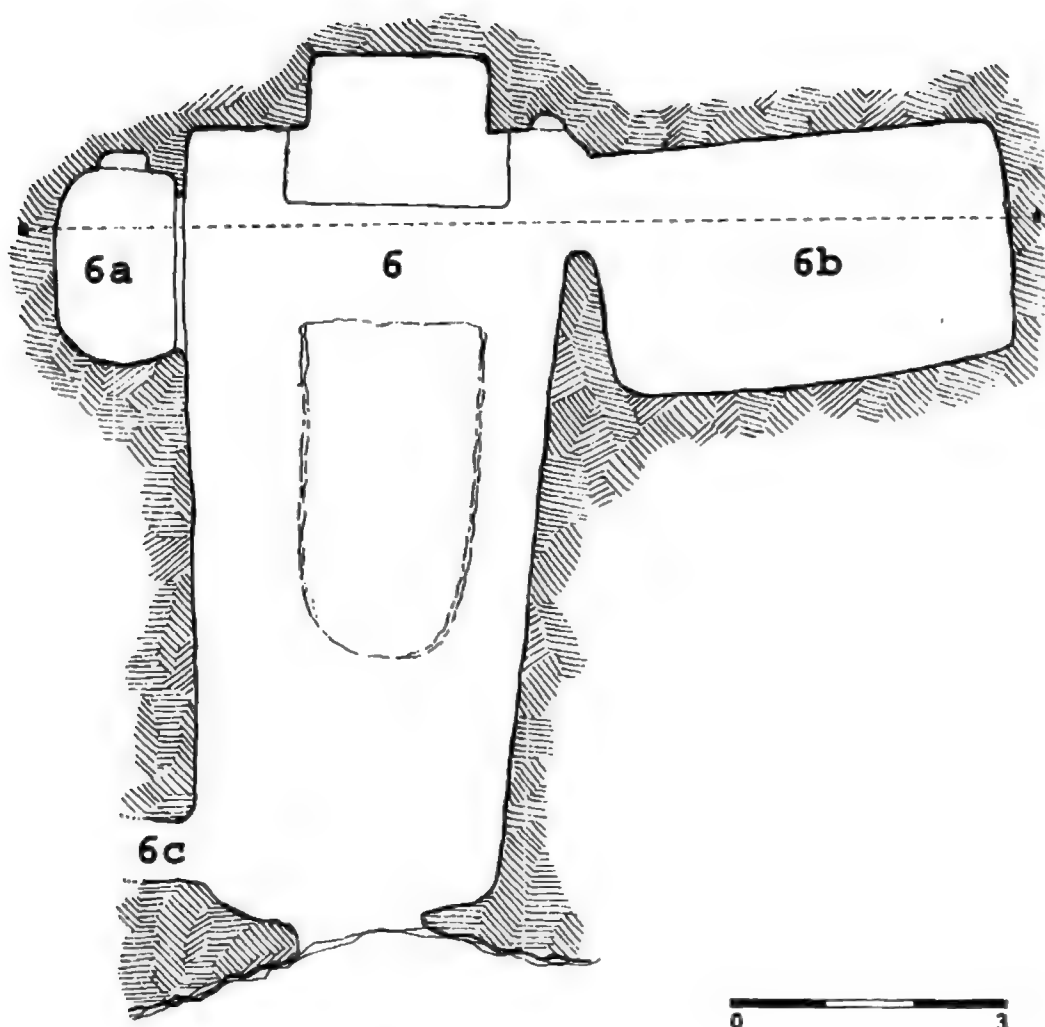


Fig. 49. Kōh-e Ēl, Caves 6-6c: plan and section.

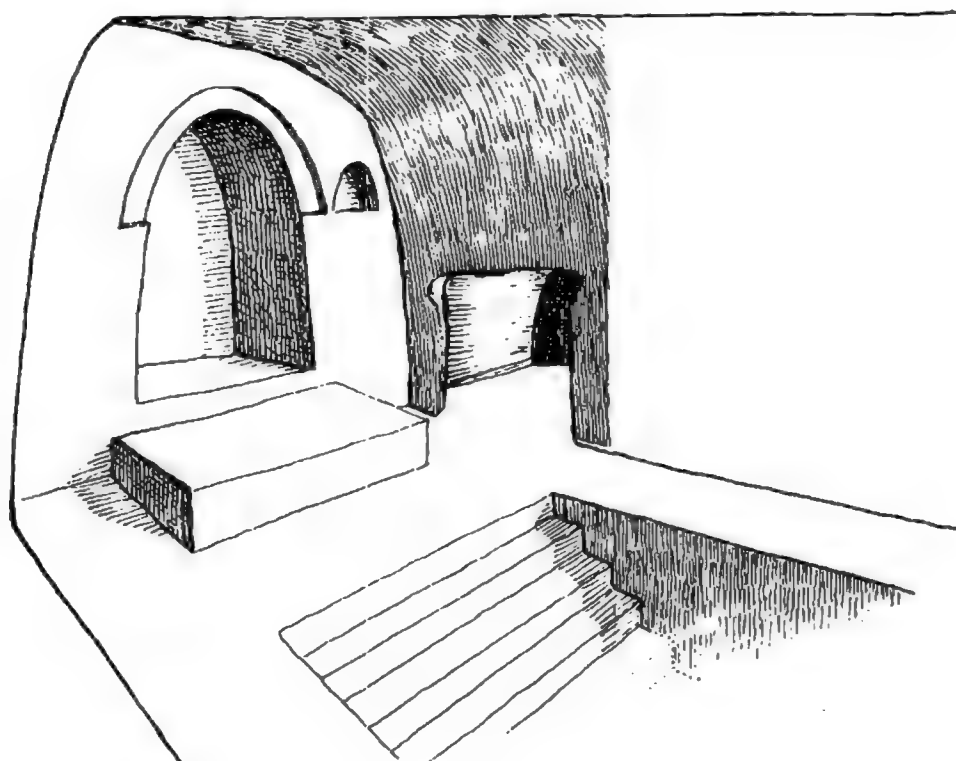


Fig. 50. Kōh-e Ēl, Cave 6: reconstruction.

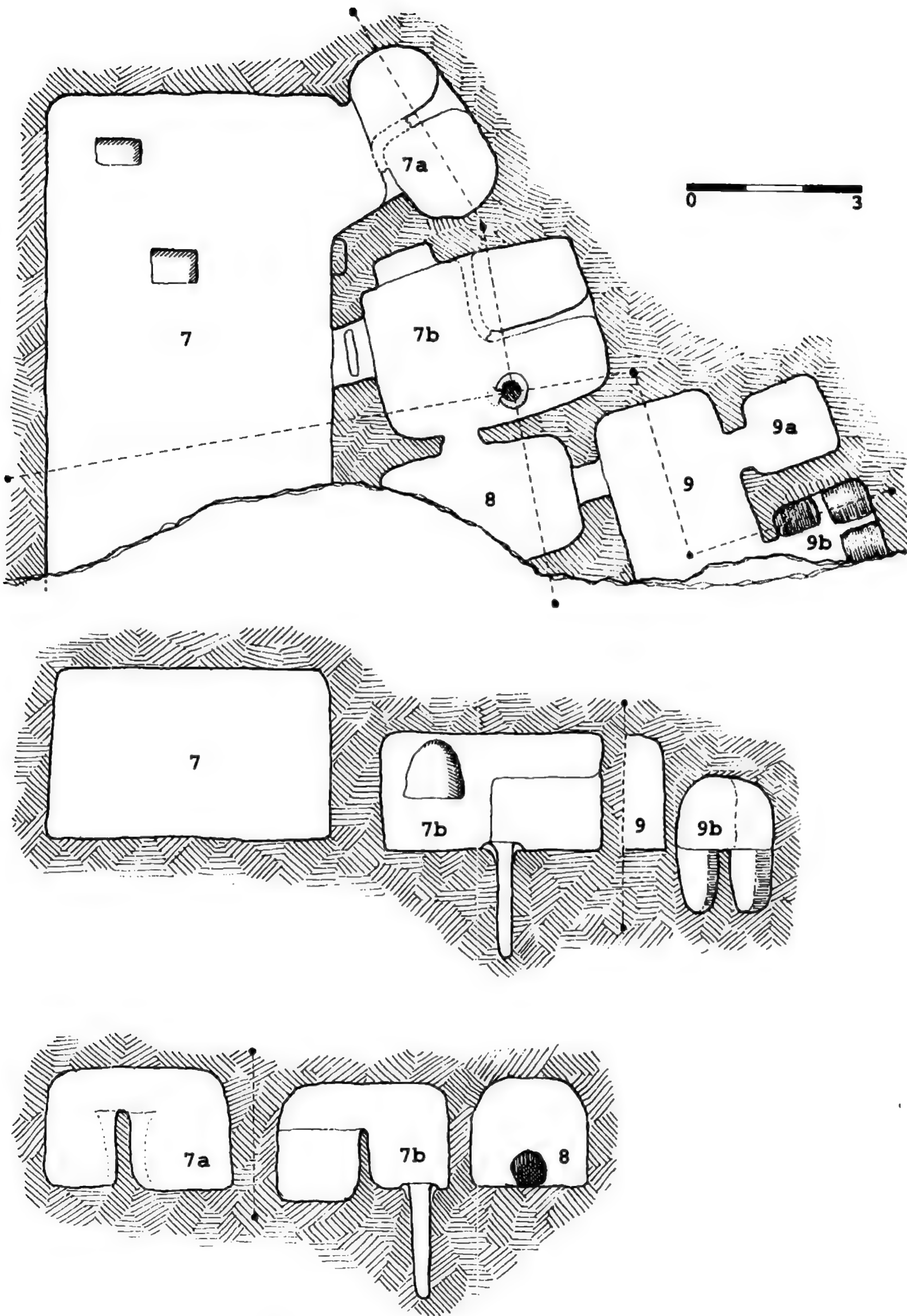


Fig. 51. Kōh-e Êl, Caves 7-9: plan and section.

phase, as is irregularly shaped *Cave 7a*, entered by an arched opening. This room is divided by a thin diaphragm, originally 1.3 m high, so that a sort of container was created on the right side. A door, crudely enlarged but still showing the slots for the wooden lintel of the original door, opens at the middle of the right-hand side of the cave, giving access to *Cave 7b*. This is a small quadrangular room with a rounded ceiling and a container measuring 2×1.5 m obtained by leaving a diaphragm forming a right angle 1 m high. A niche opens on the left wall, and to the left of the passage connecting the room to *Cave 8* there is a round pit 2 m deep, with an indentation at top, probably meant to store water.

Although later interventions are probable, *Cave 7* was clearly not designed for worship, and the adjoining rooms also pertain to the original plan.

Cave 8 (Fig. 51; Pl. LVI.a)

This is a small room, rectangular in plan, measuring c. 4×2 m and with a flat ceiling c. 2 m high. At present, it gets light from the collapsed western wall, but originally had no opening towards the exterior. The passage to *Cave 9* is clearly later than the monastic phase.

Caves 9, 9a, 9b (Fig. 51)

Cave 9 is rectangular, with a vaulted ceiling. In its present form, it measures 3.5×2.5 m, with a height of c. 2 m. The front side has collapsed. Two openings on the right-hand side lead to small *Cave 9a* (1.5×1.5 m) and *Cave 9b* (1.7 m long and 1.2 m high), which is a lumber-room. Three pits 1 m deep, clearly containers for storage, open in the pavement.

Group C (Pls. LVI.b-LVII.b)

Only few caves that open in a few isolated, small sandstone formations in front of the main group of caves were visited. They are entered by squarish doors and have flat ceilings. The front part of *Cave 10*, with slanting sidewalls and flat ceiling, is collapsed.

8. Ghār-e Shāh

The small Ghār-e Shāh group (Pl. LVIII) is situated near the village of Qōl-e Ēliyād, which is reached on foot from Tapa Hesār skirting the Bayak massif and passing through the village of Qōl-e Shāhmardān. Kōh-e Ēl is situated near the village of Bēdēsē in the Nāwa-ye-Qalandarī, which is reached from Qōl-e Shāhmardān turning left. This is probably the cave-monastery near Bidsay mentioned by Bivar (1971: 81). The village of Bēdēsē (Bidsay), not shown on the 1:100,000 map, lies just south of the Kōh-e Khūd.

The caves open on three levels, connected by stairways, along a vertical wall giving onto the valley at the centre of an impressive sandstone massif.

Ground Level

Caves 1, 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d (Figs. 52-53; Pls. LIX.a-LX.b)

Access to the complex is by a door preceded by four steps, probably not original, leading to a quadrangular room measuring 4×4.5 m, much modified during the phase of reuse. The ceiling is flat. From the left back wall you enter *Cave 1a*, a small, plain square room measuring about 1.5×1.5 m, with a flat ceiling and rounded corners. This is probably the only side room belonging to the original plan. The cave was enlarged on the right side of the back wall so as to create *Cave 1b*, measuring c. 1.8×1.5 m. The ceiling is lower than that of the original cave. Small *Cave 1c* is a store-room (1×1 m) with a round well 0.5 m deep excavated in the floor, probably meant for a large container. It opens on the right-hand wall, where a long, rectangular manger (0.5×3.8 m) was also hewn out, cutting into the right sidewall of *Cave 1b* as well. Another room (*Cave 1d*), roughly circular in plan, and with a rounded ceiling was opened at the right corner near the entrance, its floor lying c. 30 cm lower than that of the main cave. Access to the upper floor, by means of a stairway, is from the left side of the cave. A niche probably belonging to the monastic phase, with a flat base, opens nearby at 1 m from the ground level. Another small niche, on the opposite corner, is also original, while yet another to the right of the stairway belongs to the phase of reuse.

Stairway 2, almost a winding staircase, turns to the left and has steps c. 25-30 cm high.

First Level

This is made up of two rooms only. Access is had to *Cave 3* on the right when coming up from the ground floor.

Caves 3, 3a (Fig. 54; Pl. LXI)

This cave measures 3×2 m and is, clearly, a communicating room. There was a niche on the southern wall, at the centre of which there is now a large, round hole opening on the outside. A long manger with a raised edge on the left-side wall clearly belongs to the phase of reuse. *Cave 3a* has a pear-like shape, and is 5 m long. It was excavated, or largely re-worked, during the phase of reuse. Long, narrow mangers with raised edges open along all the walls.

Stairway 4 (Pl. LXI.c), forming a bend with the stairway rising from below, leads to the uppermost level of the complex. There is a small room half way along.

Second Level

This level is made up of three main rooms, largely re-worked. Access is from *Cave 5*. The three caves were not originally connected one to another, and were separately accessed by a wooden balcony reached from the inner staircase rising from the first level.

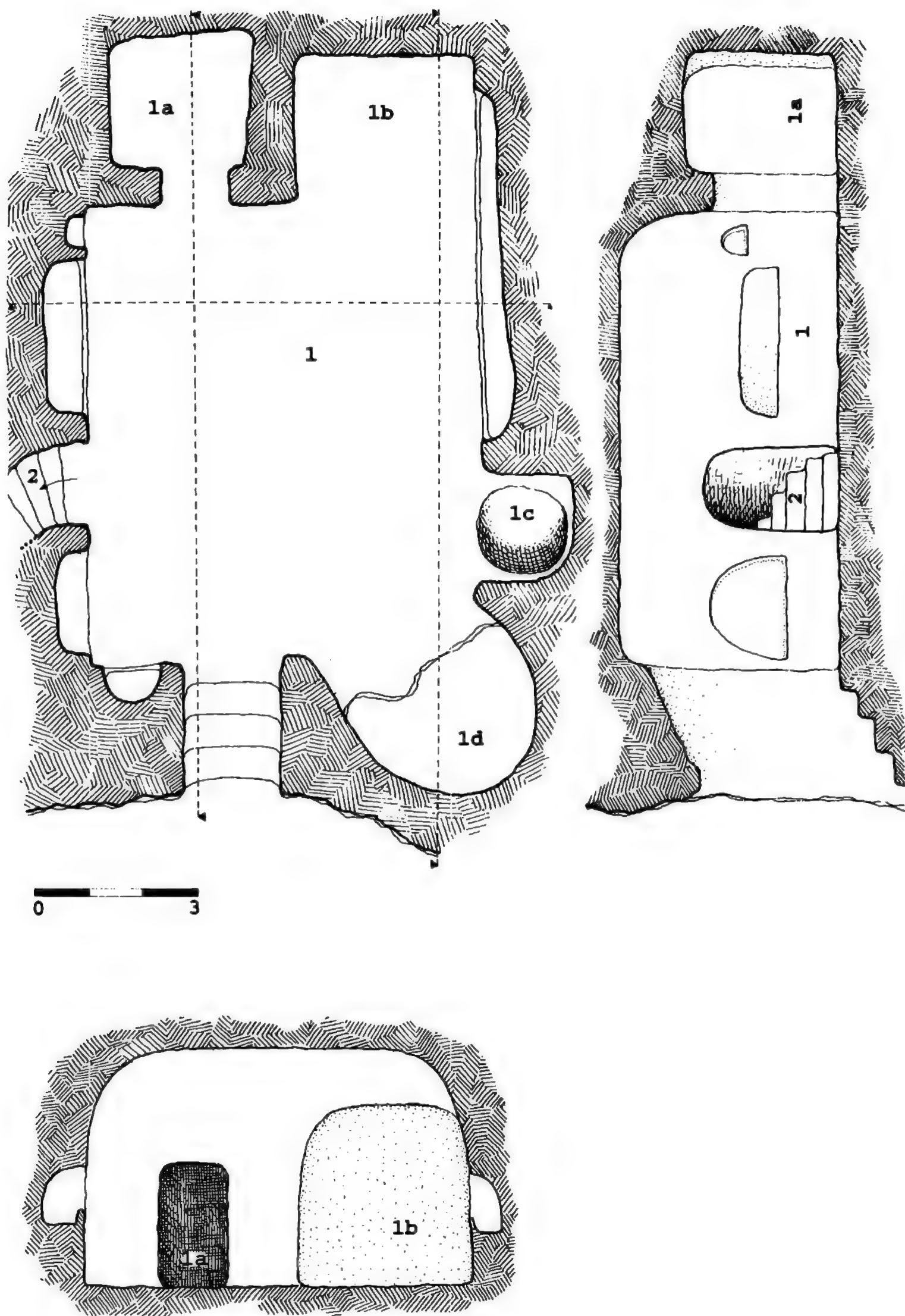


Fig. 52. Ghār-e Shāh, Caves 1-1d: plan and sections.

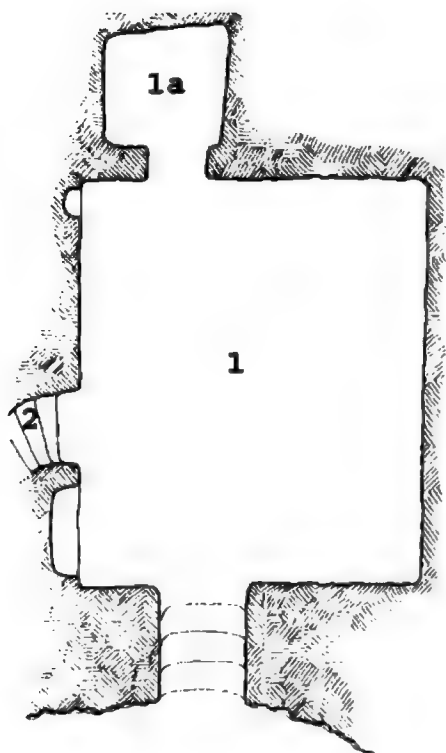
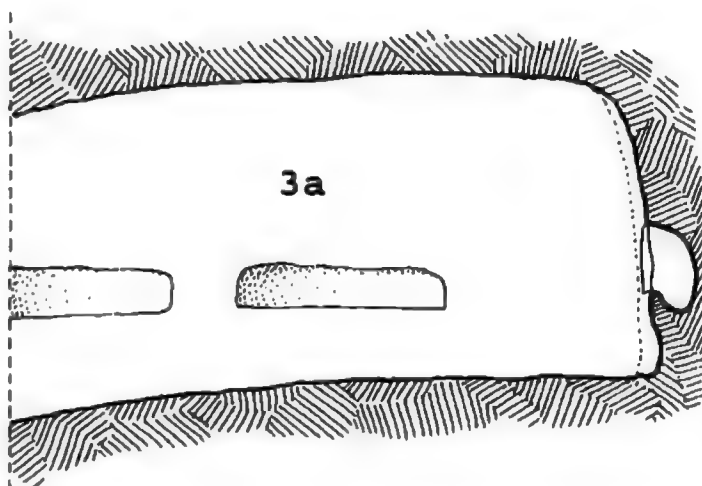
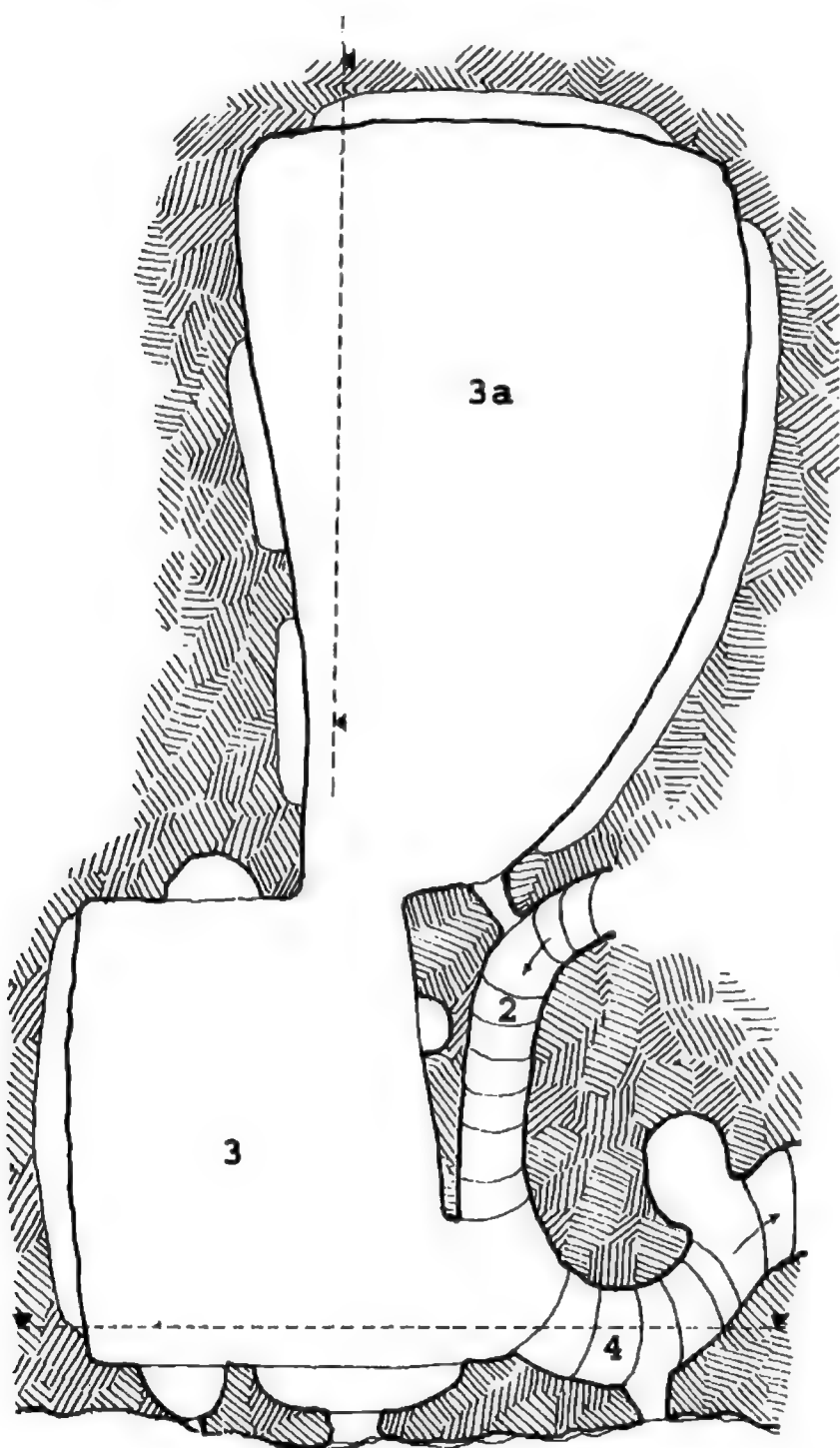
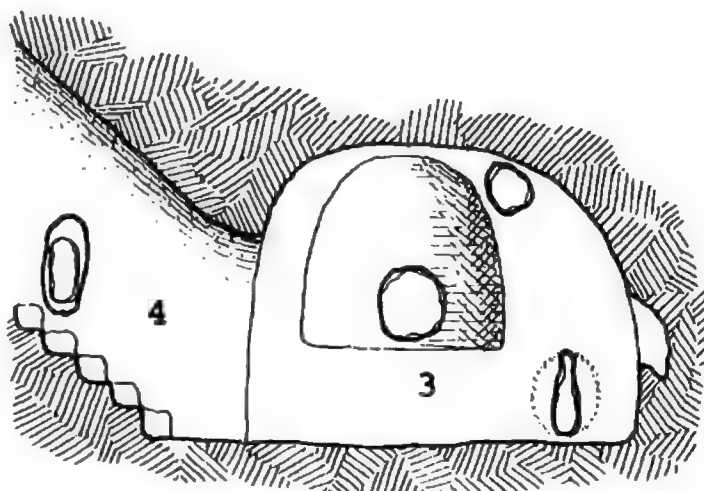


Fig. 53. Ghār-e Shāh, Caves 1, 1a: reconstruction of the original plan.

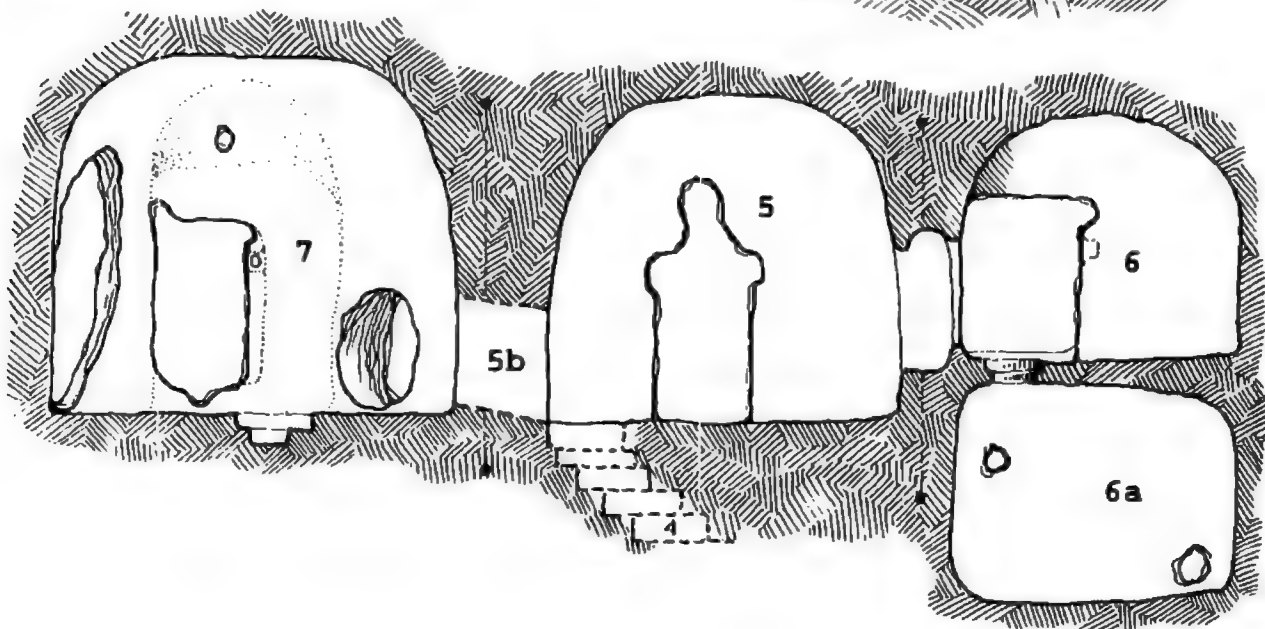
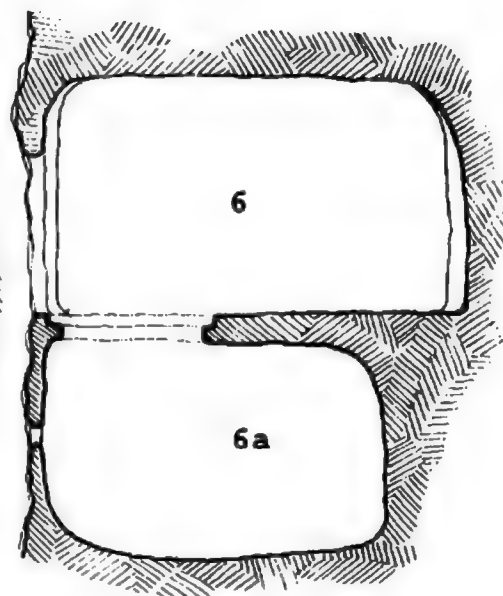
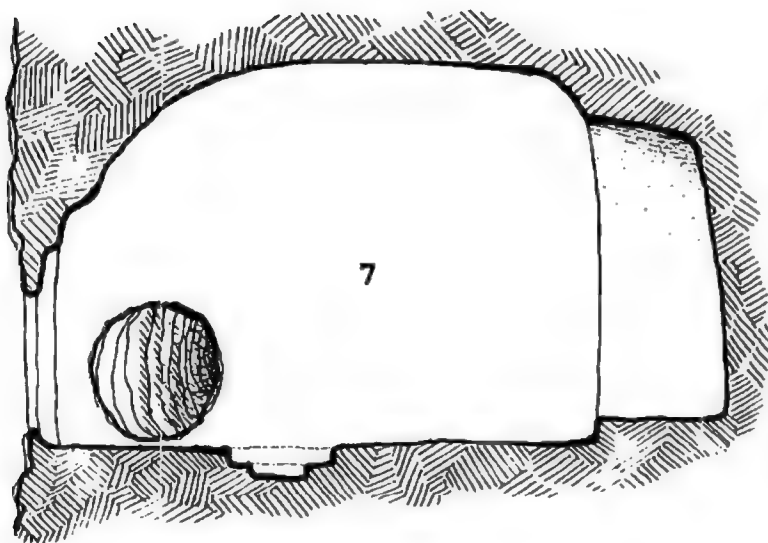
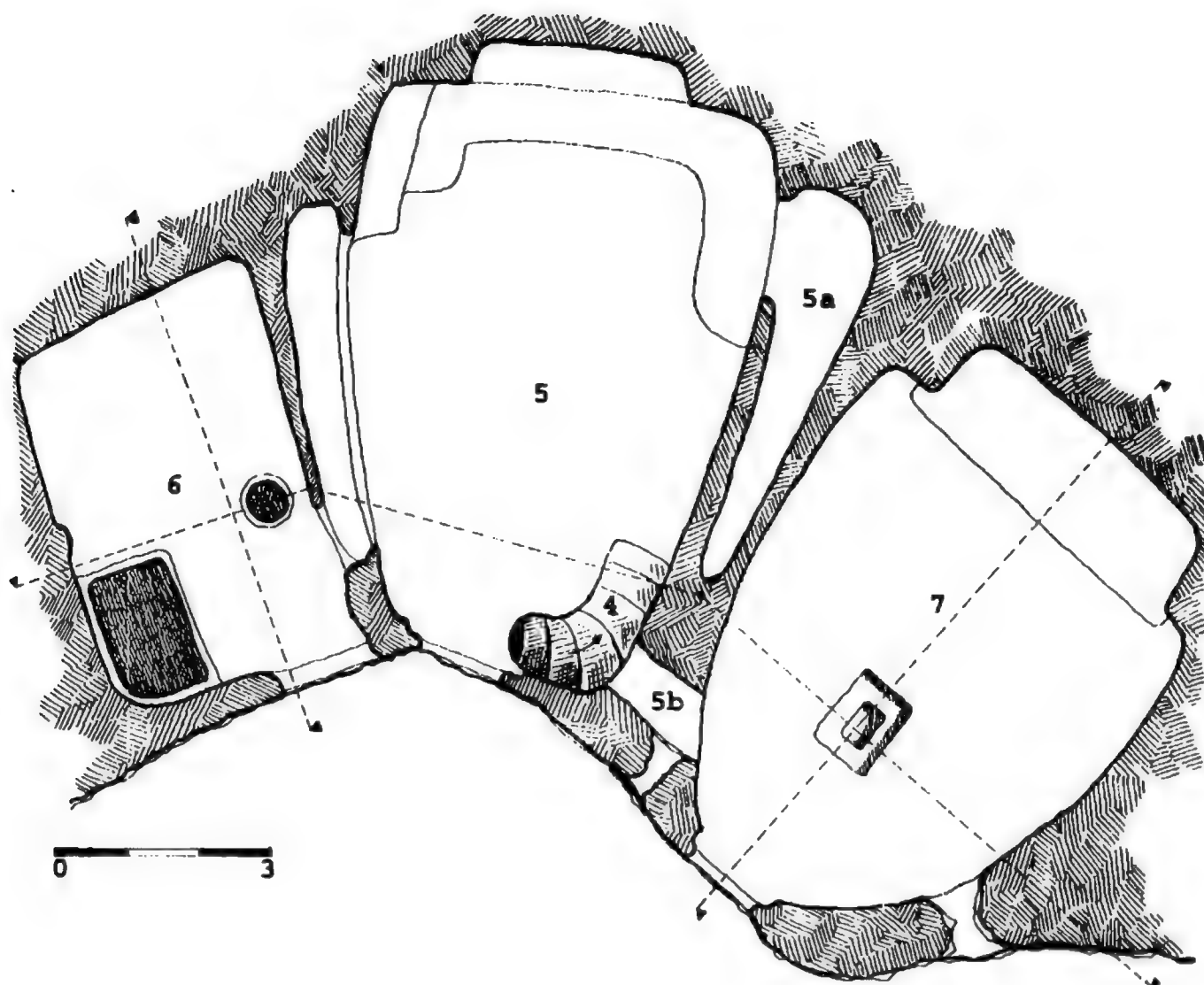


0 3



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Fig. 54. Ghār-e Shāh, Caves 3, 3a: plan and sections.



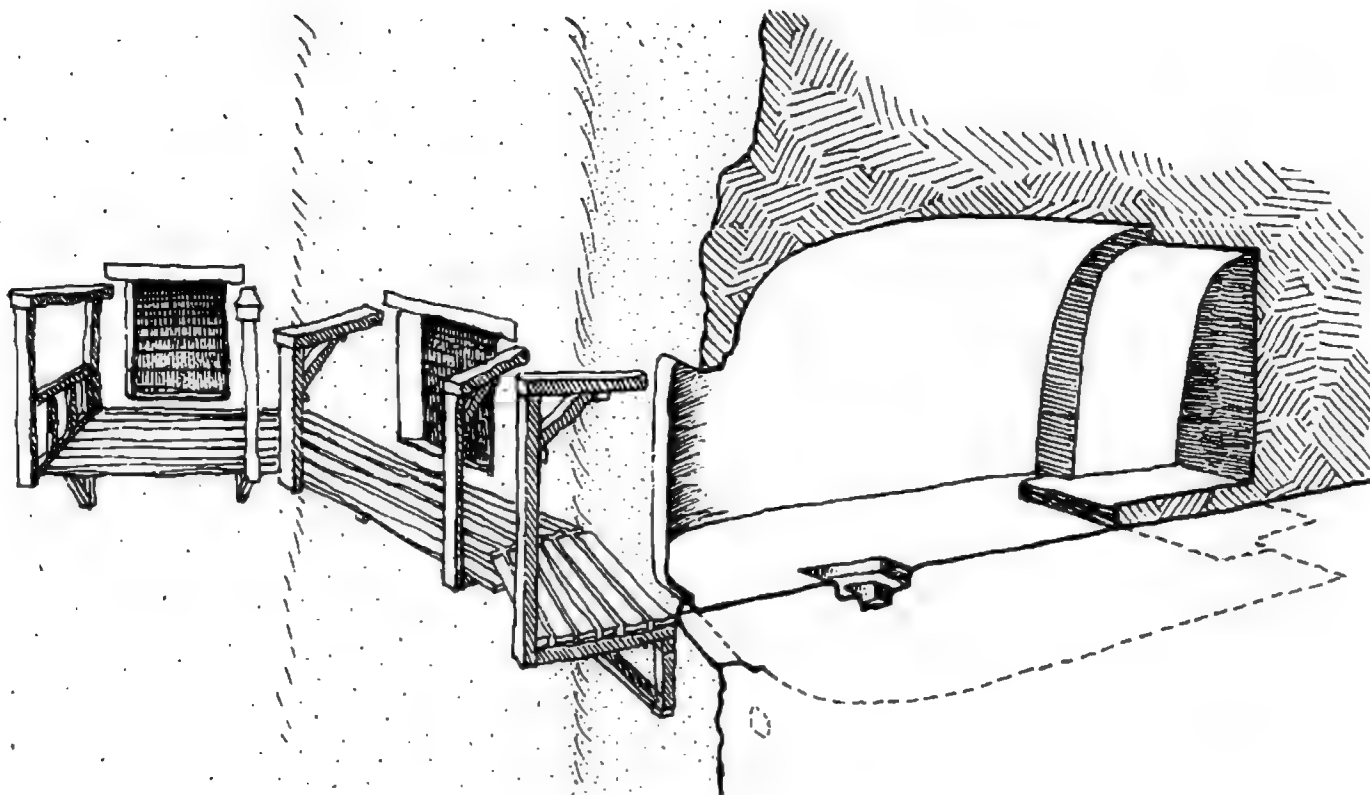


Fig. 56. Ghār-e Shāh, proposed reconstruction of original access to Caves 5-7 and of Cave 7.

Caves 5, 5a (Figs. 55-56; Pl. LII)

Cave 5 is in the form of an irregular, rounded polygon, with a rounded ceiling. It was originally accessed from an outer balcony through a rectangular door, now irregularly enlarged on top; the slots for the upper lintel can be still made out. There is a niche at the centre of the back-side wall, along which runs a bench irregularly extending for about 1 m along the sidewalls — probably a portion of the unremoved working bench. An elongated manger, pertaining to the post-monastic phase, opens on the left-hand wall, on which a passage to *Cave 6*, measuring 0.7×0.5 m, has also been opened. The small, irregularly elongated *Cave 5a* also belongs to the post-monastic phase.

Caves 6, 6a (Figs. 55-56; Pl. LXII.a, b)

Cave 6 is a small room, rectangular in plan, measuring 5-6 m². The door through which it was originally entered from the outer balcony shows four slots for two wooden lintels, and is preceded by a step. Two trap-doors open in the floor, leading to *Cave 6a* below. One measures 0.5×1 m, the other, circular in shape, has a diameter of 30 cm. Both openings have an indentation for a lid. *Cave 6a* is similar to the upper room, its walls are worked with care.

Cave 7 (Figs. 55-56; Pl. LXII.c)

Entry to the room is through an irregular opening (5b) no higher than 1 m, and 0.5-0.7 m wide, clearly

made during the phase of reuse. It is the most important cave of the small complex, having originally been a chapel entered through a rectangular door (which now functions as a window) from the outside balcony. The cave is roughly trapezoidal in plan, and is covered by a parabolic-vaulted ceiling slightly flattened at the top. A large niche, perfectly executed, preceded by a low pedestal, opens on the back-side wall. At the centre of the cave there is a rectangular pit ($0.75 \times 0.5 \times 0.2$ m) in two levels, with tapering sides.

The awkward execution of what had been probably planned as a rectangular cave finds comparison at Bāmiyān, as for example in Cave 111 (Higuchi 1983-84, III: 26, fig. 19). Niches similar to that opening here on the central wall are also common at Bāmiyān, with or without pedestals. An example is in Cave 468 (*ibid.*, II: pl. 116), a notable feature of which is the arch flattened on top. The function of the pit at the centre of the room is difficult to explain. Its rectangular shape rules out the possibility of a *stūpa* foundation, nor can it have been a pit for the fire ritual given its distance from the niche⁽²²⁾. However, being on the same axis with the door and niche, it is likely to be the remains of a cultic structure.

⁽²²⁾ Fire rituals were common in Gandharan Buddhism and in later Buddhist sanctuaries of Afghanistan (Verardi 1994).

THE CAVES ALONG THE QŌL-E KARĪZ
IN THE NĀWA-YE KHODĀYDĀD (Figs. 3, 57)

These groups are situated in a valley opening towards Ghūhūrī and closed upstream by the Kōh-e Khūd, a characteristic peak, to the northeast. The road leads off from Ghūjūr in a northeastern direction. Sangdara is located a couple of kilometres from the Ghūjūr junction, in the Sepāhya neighbourhood near Wakīl Khēl. The road proceeds to Tapa Hesār, where it branches off, to the left, towards the eastern part of the Safīd Kōh, and, to the right, to Ūlyātū through the Kōtal-e Rīg Gardān. Tapa Hesār is an imposing, sandstone rock rising in

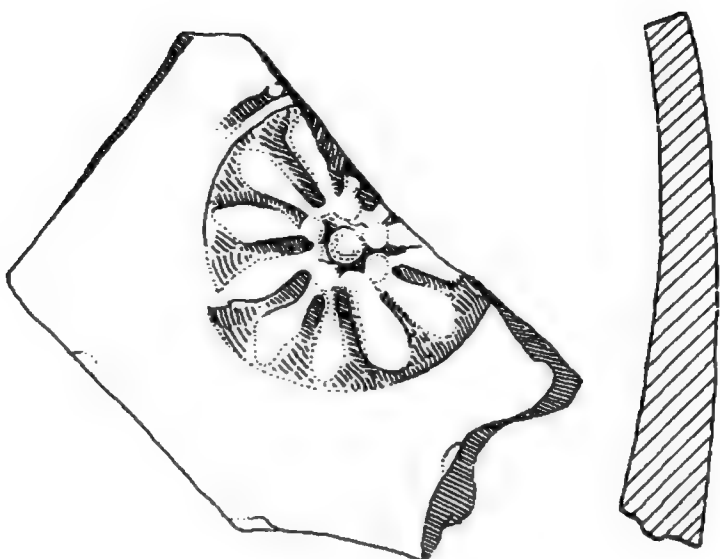
the Sarāu (Sar-e Āb) neighbourhood facing the QŌl-e Karīz, near which is the small Bālā Khāna group, immediately to the north, and Kōh-e Nūzūl, a short distance to the east. Tapa Hākīrīz, a high structural mound that yields red, pre-Islamic pottery (Fig. 58), also rises near Tapa Hesār. Unfortunately, it could not be examined. These sites are at a very short distance from the Kōh-e Khūd (Pl. LXVIII.a).

The large, impressive massif of Bayak is further to the north, just past Bālā Khāna. It does not face towards the QŌl-e Karīz, but towards the slope of the Qājūnkī. The small Lālā Khēl group is located at the closure of the valley.



Scale 1:1

Fig. 57. Map showing the Nāwa-ye Khodāyād, southwest of the Kōh-e Khūd, and the area of Lūmān.



The caves (Fig. 59; Pl. LXIII.a, b), once forming one of the most important groups of the whole area, are hewn out of a sandstone formation now very heavily eroded. This is what is left of the watershed once separating two small valleys, now practically united, formed by the Qöl-e Käriz. The nearest village is Mita Khēl. There is no access to some of the caves, which are connected by means of stairways, one of which is in good condition. Underneath the part of the complex where *Caves 1* and *2* open you come to a very long, stepped blind corridor, which was blocked up half way along by a low stone wall in 1976 (Pl. LXVII.b), and then to *Cave 3*.

Only three caves could be partly documented. There is sufficient evidence to say that two of them were never completed.

Cave 1 (Figs. 60-61; Pls. LXIII.b, c)

The cave has a square plan, with slanting walls and flat ceiling, thus appearing in section as a truncated parabolic arch. Two large parabolic niches starting from near ground level and slightly flattened on top are situated at the ends of the back side wall, along which runs a pedestal 30 cm high. Two square niches at about 1.5 m from the floor open approximately at the centre of the sidewalls.

Large niches of this kind are found in large domed rooms at Bāmiyān such as caves 119 and 150 (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pls. 40, 50), which, however, have a central niche. Cave 165 (*ibid.*: pl. 60) can also be cited.

Caves 2, 2a (Figs. 62-63; Pls. LXIV.a-LXV.c)

This cave is rectangular in plan, 14 m long and 8.2 m wide (measurements taken on the bench running along the back wall), with slanting walls and a parabolic-vaulted ceiling starting from a double string course which still preserves part of the original plaster, blackened by soot. The large semicircular niche in the back wall is not perfectly symmetrical; it has a base of

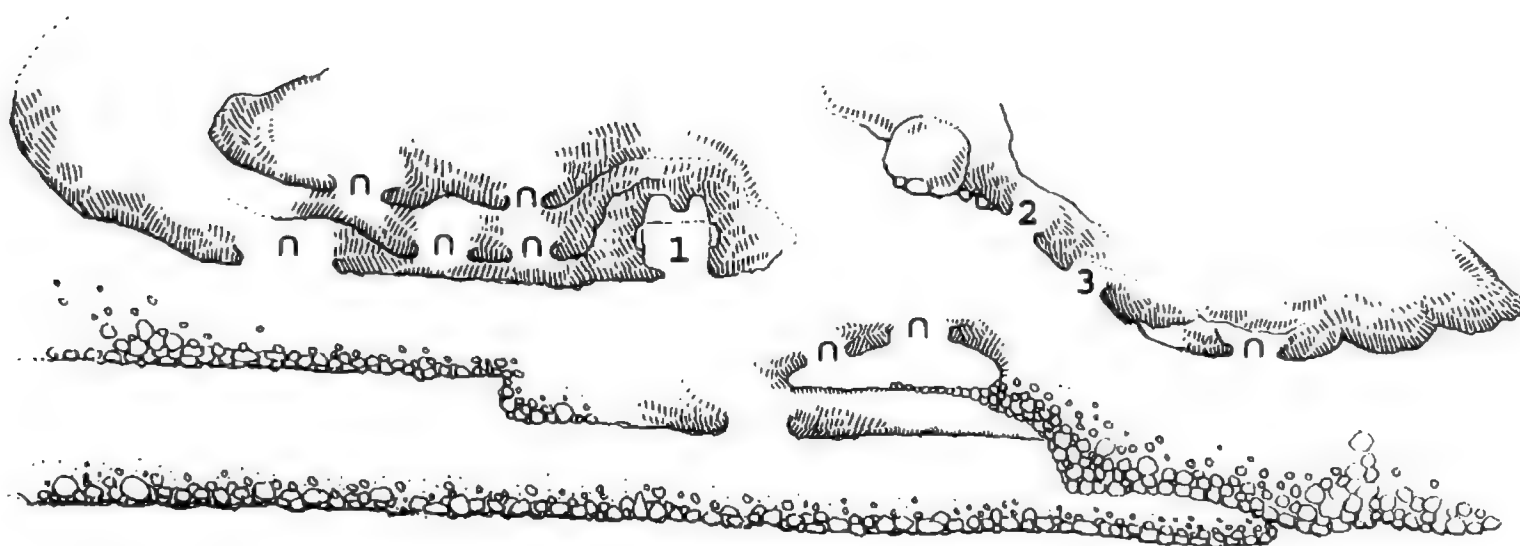


Fig. 59. Sangdara, plan (sketch).

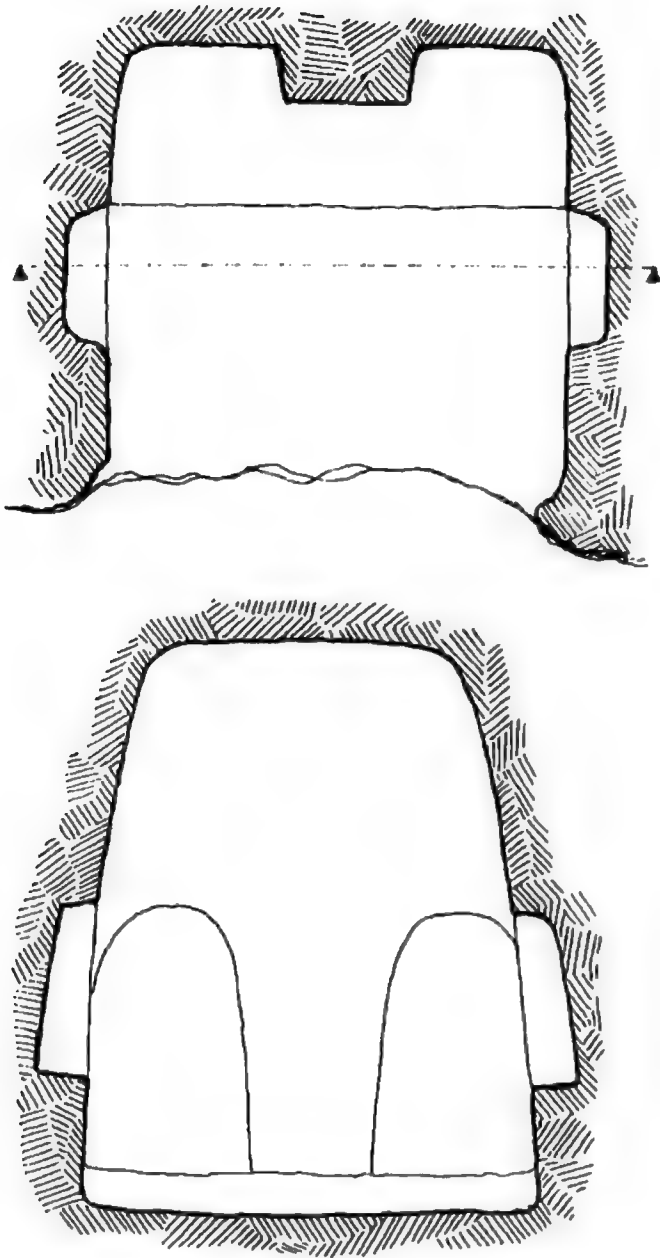


Fig. 60. Sangdara, Cave 1: plan and section.

4.5 m and rests on a bench 0.85 m high running along the whole wall, having probably remained unfinished. On the right of the central niche there are two small niches in a staggered position, with the bottom right corner of the upper one corresponding to the vertex of the lower one.

A small bench, much re-worked during the post-monastic phase, runs along both sidewalls. It is not part of the architectural project, but pertains to the phase of construction, and was not removed at the end of the work, like the small bench left below the two small niches described above. The cave, like many others, was left unfinished.

Along the sidewalls, at about 4 m from the back wall, there are two large niches facing one another, each with a base of 2.65 m, doubled on top by a plain, decorative band. The upper sections of their arches cut the string course. On the right-hand wall, near the corner, there is one more niche with a base of 1.2 m bordered by a band decorated with a geometrical motif formed by thirteen triangles, which are slightly cut off on top by the string

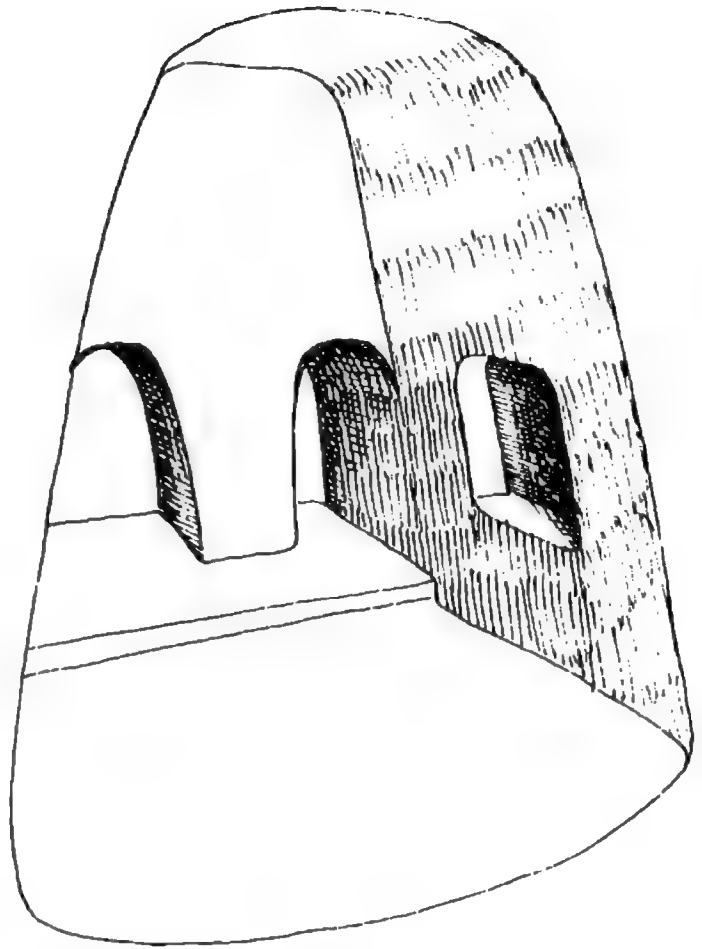


Fig. 61. Sangdara, Cave 1: reconstruction.

course. It is likely that a similar decoration was also planned for the bands of the main side niches.

Upon entering the cave, we have on the left a door with a high sill leading to a small room, square in plan and with a flat ceiling, with a bench along three walls (*Cave 2a*).

This is one of the largest sanctuaries visited in the region, and finds comparison in Cave 330 at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pl. 94), both for the type of vaulting and for the presence of a string course, and indeed for the side niches doubled on top by a decorative band. As for the string course cut by the upper part of the niches, comparison can be made with *peščera* 1 at Shik-shin (Qarāshāhr, Xinjiang), where the upper parts of the arched doors cut the indentation formed by a lower lintel and a torus, with the barrelled vault jutting out above it (Pl. CXVI).

Cave 3 (Figs. 64-65; Pls. LXVI, LXVII.a)

This cave is much ruined, and shows ample traces of reuse, which makes interpretation of its original appearance particularly difficult. The cave is 11 m long and divided into three aisles, the one on the right now almost completely lost. The aisles were separated by two rows of three pillars. The pavement of the central aisle is higher, at present, than that of the side aisles, and its ceiling is vaulted, with the vault coming lower towards the back. A rectangular niche opens on the back wall, possibly re-working the original one.

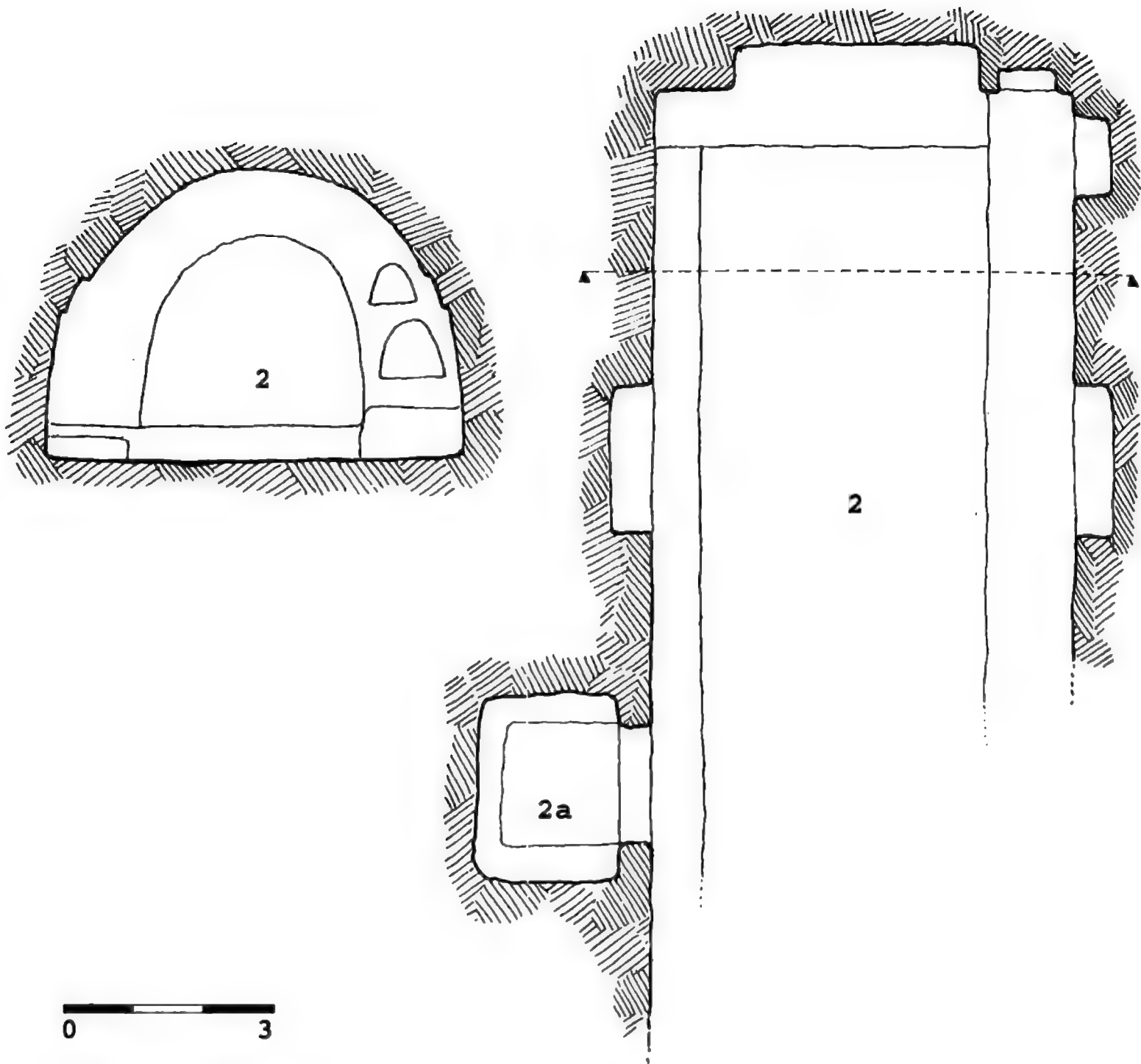


Fig. 62. Sangdara, Caves 2, 2a: plan and section.

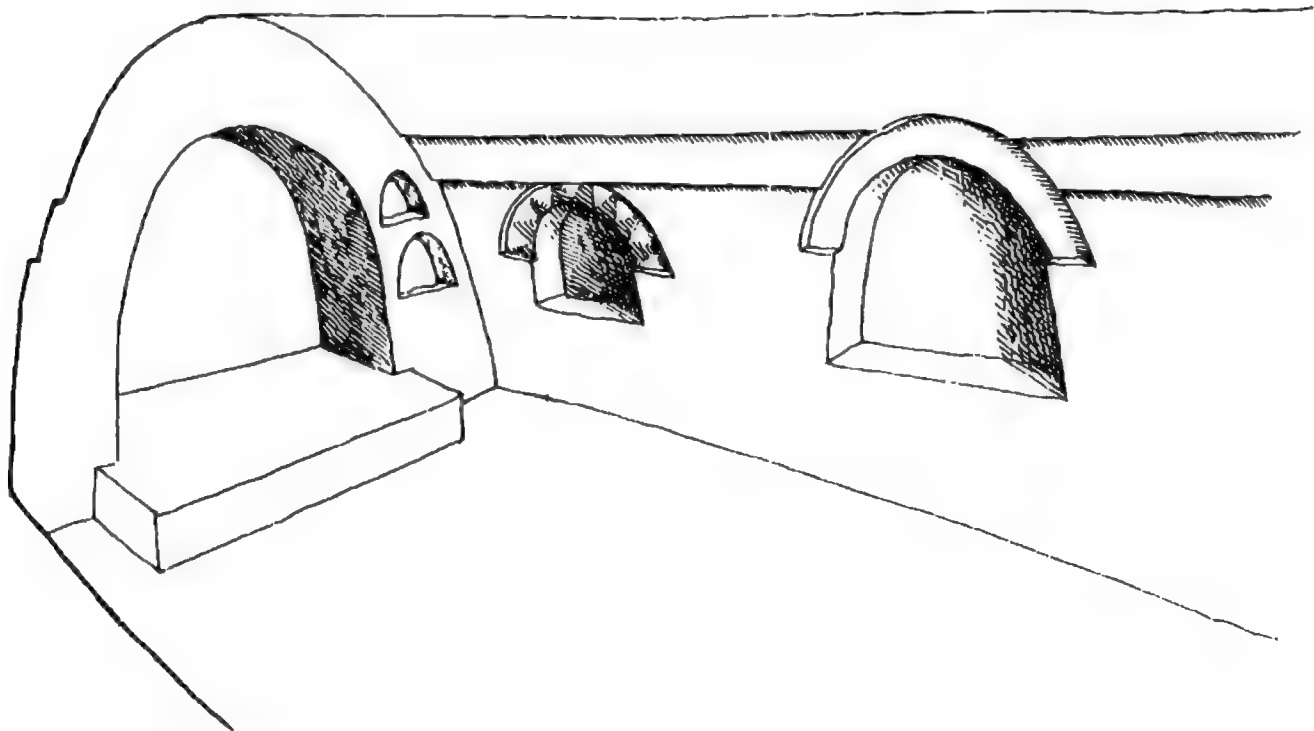


Fig. 63. Sangdara, Cave 2: reconstruction.

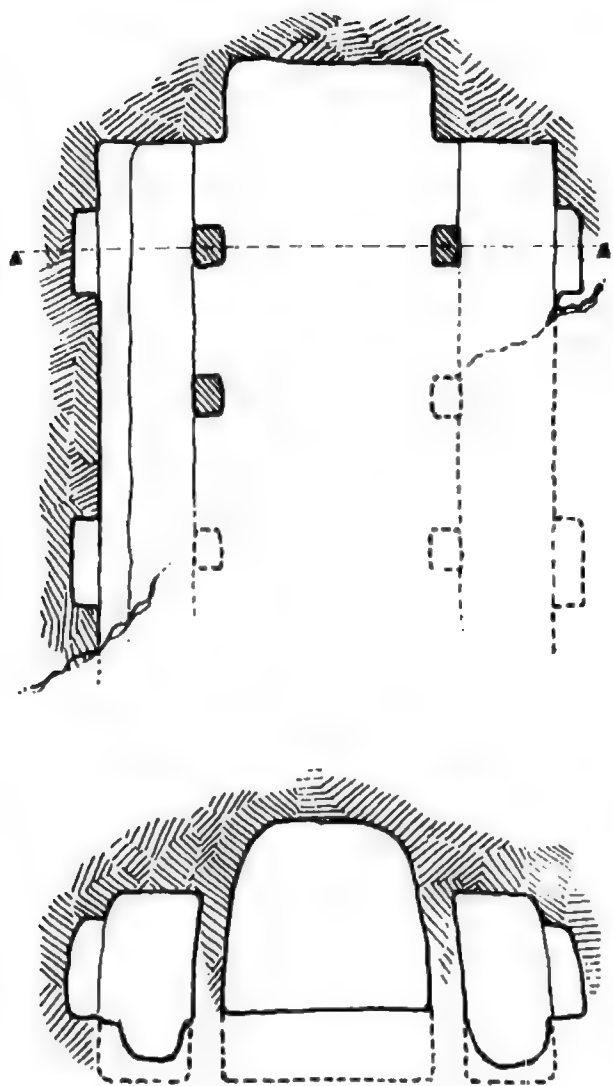


Fig. 64. Sangdara, Cave 3: plan and section.

The floor of the side aisles is 1 m lower than the pavement of the central aisle, and their ceiling is flat. There are two niches on the left-hand wall, with bases of 2.25 and 1.9 m respectively. Both niches open on a bench pertaining to the construction phase and not removed, the work being left unfinished. During the post-monastic phase this bench was cut to form two steps. The bench is also partly preserved along the back wall.

The cave may be compared with Cave 4 at Ghār-e Shākī Nōka, which is also longitudinally divided by two rows of pillars.

10. Tapa Hesār and Bālā Khāna

The massif of Tapa Hesār (Fig. 66; Pls. LXVIII.a-LXIX.a) rises in isolation in a small plain, and has suffered greatly from the collapse of large blocks of rock, which have split away from the walls and lie at the foot of the rock formation. The majority of the caves can be made out only from the sections which are now

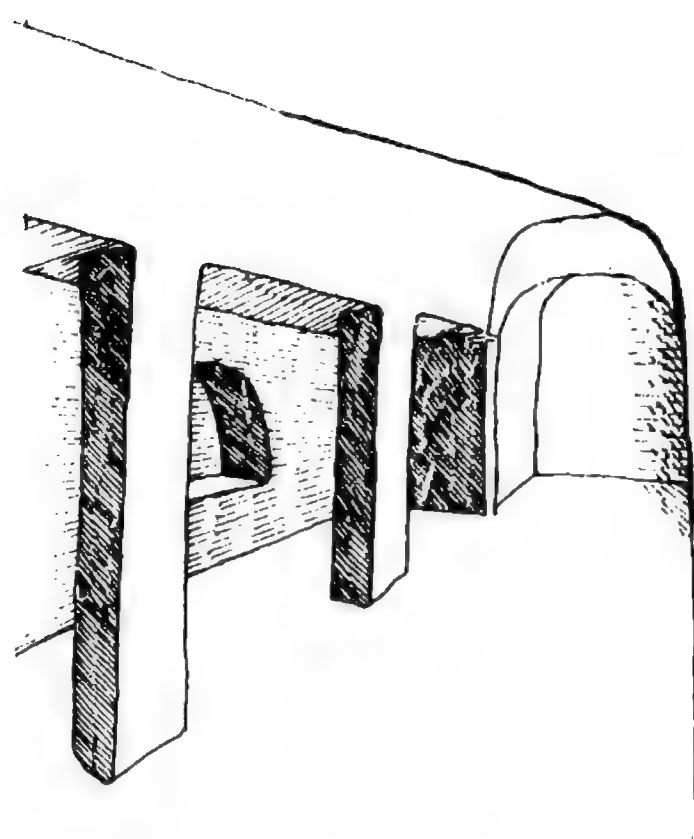


Fig. 65. Sangdara, Cave 3: reconstruction (form of pillars not suggested).

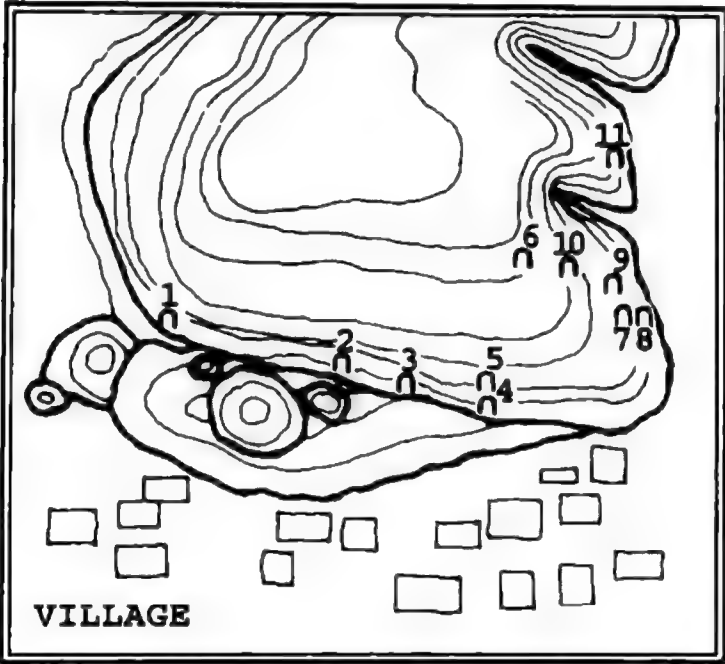


Fig. 66. Tapa Hesār. plan and prospect (sketch).

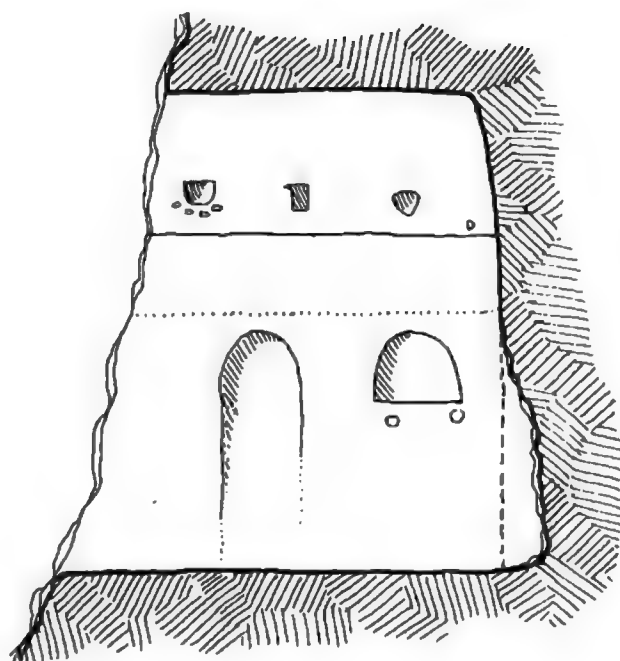
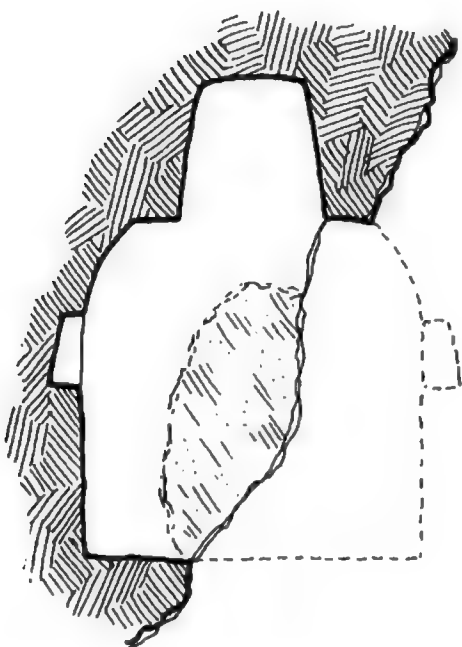
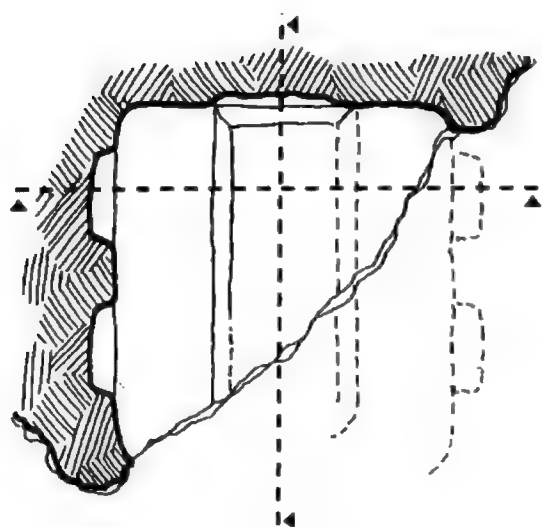


Fig. 67. Tapa Hesār, Cave 1: plan and sections.

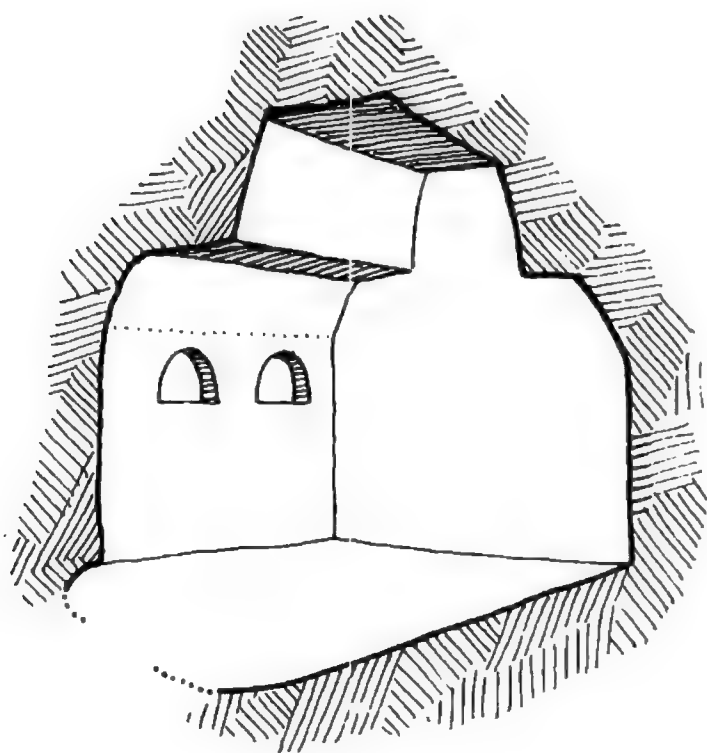


Fig. 68. Tapa Hesār, Cave 1: reconstruction.

observable. The caves looking south (the direction from which they are approached) are reached by going up through the village (Qal'a-ye Hesār). The level at which the lowermost caves now open (Pl. LXX.b) must correspond to the original outer frequentation level, because at the centre of the wall is the entrance to a long tunnel-stairway (*Passage 3*) cutting across the whole massif and opening into the northern wall, where the frequentation level is much lower (Pls. LXXII.a, LXXIII.a). A few other caves, again with the front parts collapsed, are to be found there, and a few more to the northeast of the massif (Pl. LXIX.b). The caves at Hesār were not thoroughly surveyed, but a few of them can be described.

South Wall of the Massif

Cave 1 (Figs. 67-68; Pl. LXX.a)

This cave opens in the southwestern corner of the wall, and its eastern part is lost. Despite its very bad state of preservation, it can be reconstructed as a square chapel with two niches on each sidewall, and a rather

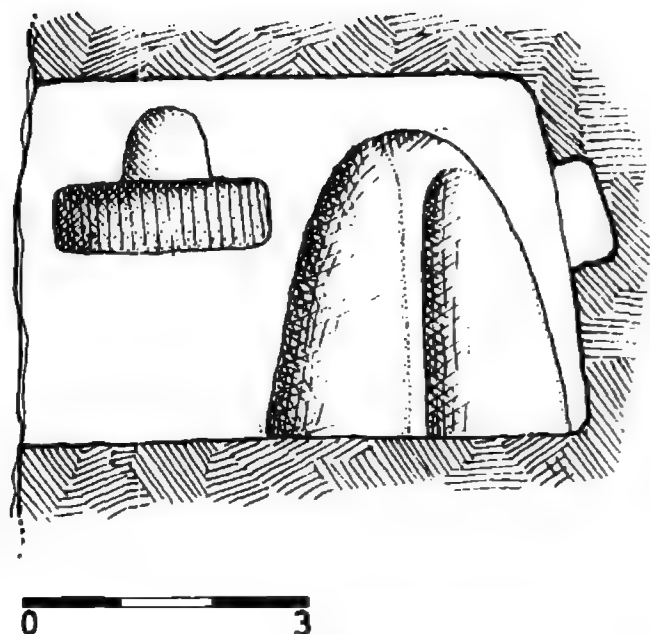
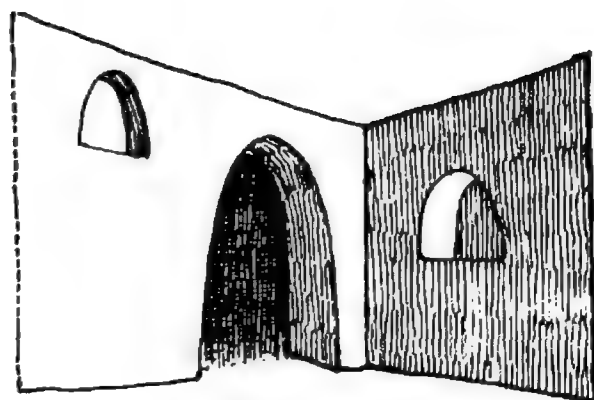


Fig. 69. Tapa Hesār, Cave 7: prospect and reconstruction.



peculiar roof. The corners of the entrance wall are rounded off. The ceiling starts to curve, but then becomes flat and opens into a central shaft, trapezoidal in section. Thus the upper part of the cave looks in section like a sort of stylized trilobate niche.

The back wall of the original cave wall was reworked and enlarged during a phase of reuse. The large, square hollows at the start of the ceiling, where wooden beams were set, also seem to pertain to the post-monastic phase, like the others to be seen in this part of the collapsed mountain wall.

This cave can be compared to Cave 201 at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pl. 73.1-2), in section much like a trilobate niche whose upper extremities have been extended to house wooden lintels as a part of a system to close in the loggia.

Cave 2, Passage 3, Caves 4-6 (Pl. LXX)

Along the pathway halfway up the hill opens *Passage 3*, a long stairway which cuts through the massif connecting the southern to the northern wall. The southern entrance is at a higher level than the northern one. At the time of our visit, the passage was closed by a modern wall, but a few meters after the entrance, you could reach a rectangular cave, now used as a storage room, which could not be photographed. As pointed out above, the reason why this stepped tunnel was excavated is not clear, since the Hesār massif is relatively small, and its northern slope can be reached in a few minutes from the outside. The only explanation seems to be the presence of inner caves (like the one we saw), the access to which could be easily blocked in case of need.

At the left of the entrance to *Passage 3*, there are the remains of *Cave 2*, of which only the back wall and a very small part of the right wall remain. The ceiling was flat. A parabolic niche, 1.6 m high and 40-50 cm deep, opens on the back wall. To the right, there is a rectangular door, slightly raised (c. 20 cm) leading to a room which was not visited.

A few other chapels (4, 5, 6) open in this part of the massif. *Cave 6* had a parabolic vault.

Cave 7 (Fig. 69; Pl. LXXI)

This cave opens in the southeastern corner of the massif, and only two walls (at the back and on the right) and a part of the flat ceiling survive. There is a large parabolic, unfinished door (?) starting from the ground at the corner with the left wall. It shows a vertical rib at the centre, providing useful evidence on the working process: half of the rock to be excavated was partly removed, and subsequently the other half, each time leaving a central diaphragm. To the left of this unfinished door, there was a small parabolic niche, since reworked into a rectangular cavity. One more niche opens on the right wall.

Eastern Side of the Massif

Caves 8a, b, Corridor 8c (Fig. 70; Pl. LXXII)

Caves 8a and *38b* became one with the collapse of the original dividing wall. The ceiling of both caves was flat.

On the northern wall of *Cave 8a* there was once a large niche, and high on the right sidewall, there remains another, small parabolic niche. At the right corner opens a niche pertaining to the post-monastic phase, in turn broken through, and giving access to *Corridor 8c*, whose front part has collapsed. It is likely that the corridor turned to left, thus allowing access to *Cave 8b*, and, from there, to *Cave 8a*.

Caves 9, 10, 11 (Fig. 71; Pls. LXXII.a, LXXIII)

These squarish, flat-roofed caves are located at the centre of the wall, and their entire front part has slid down. They were very carefully worked; traces of reuse are to be seen. *Cave 11* has a parabolic vault; there is a small niche along the left sidewall.

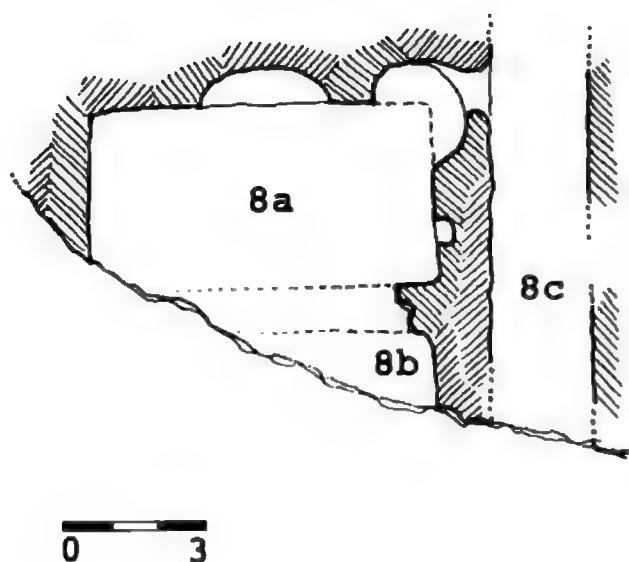


Fig. 70. Tapa Hesār, Caves 8-8c: plan and section.

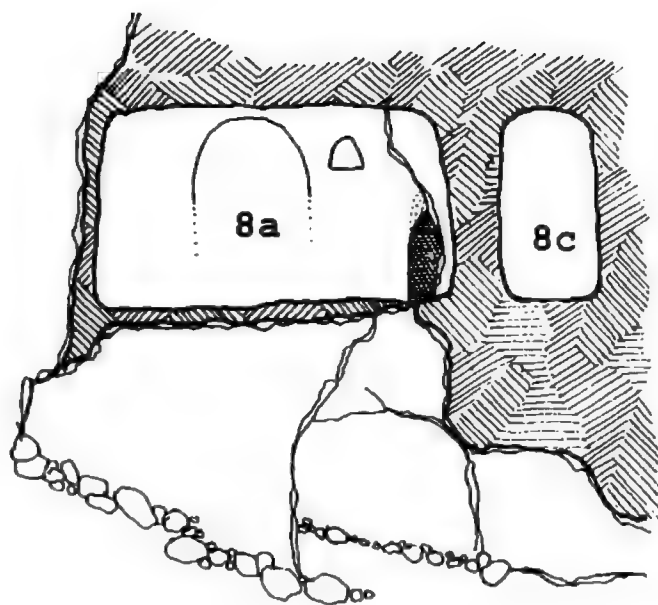


Fig. 71. Tapa Hesār, Caves 9-10c: plan and section.

Bālā Khāna (Pl. LXXIV) is a gorge, approximately rectangular in shape. It is much eroded, and houses a few caves, the largest of which, rectangular or trapezoidal in section, open at the lower level and are almost entirely filled in. The other caves, a few metres higher up in the massif, are small cells with rectangular openings.

In the sandstone ridge of Kōh-e Nūzūl (Pl. LXXV), only a few caves, or rather small cells, are hewn out.

11. Bayak and Lālā Khēl

The massif of Bayak (Fig. 72; Pls. LXXVI.a-LXXVII.c) has the form of a widened V, in which the right-hand side — the side reached first coming from Hesār — has no caves hewn into the rock. The few caves are on the left-hand side, but so high up that it is impossible to visit them without the appropriate equipment. The caves are at one and the same level, and were certainly connected to the lower chambers by means of stairways. Erosion (Pls. LXXVII.b-LXXVIII.a) responsible for the complete obliteration of the ground-level caves from which the upper floors were reached.

The two parts of the massif are connected by an artificial passage located at the point of the V (Pl. LXXVIII.a). It has a high, parabolic vaulted roof, and was still negotiable in 1976, though in bad condition (Pl. LXXVIII.b). The reason why the passage is so high, is, probably, that camels had also to cross it. This passage was the only way of getting to the caves in antiquity, as they must have been reached only from Hesār, across Bālā Khāna. In fact, it was almost impossible to get there from the opposite side, that is, from the slope of the Qājūnkī rivulet, because a rocky bastion, now greatly eroded, barred access.

The sandstone formation at Lālā Khēl (Pl. LXXIX), which has undergone a striking phenomenon of wind erosion, rises from the small plain of Sar Sādeq, crossed by the Qājūnkī. Only a few caves were excavated at the base of this massif. They were inhabited until recently, and besides being blackened by soot, are in a very poor condition. A cave, whose front part has collapsed, has a niche in the back wall (Pl. LXXX.a). The cave was left unfinished, because the working bench below the niche was only partly removed. Another cave (Pl. LXXX.b), which is part of a badly damaged subgroup, preserves three small niches and traces of plaster.

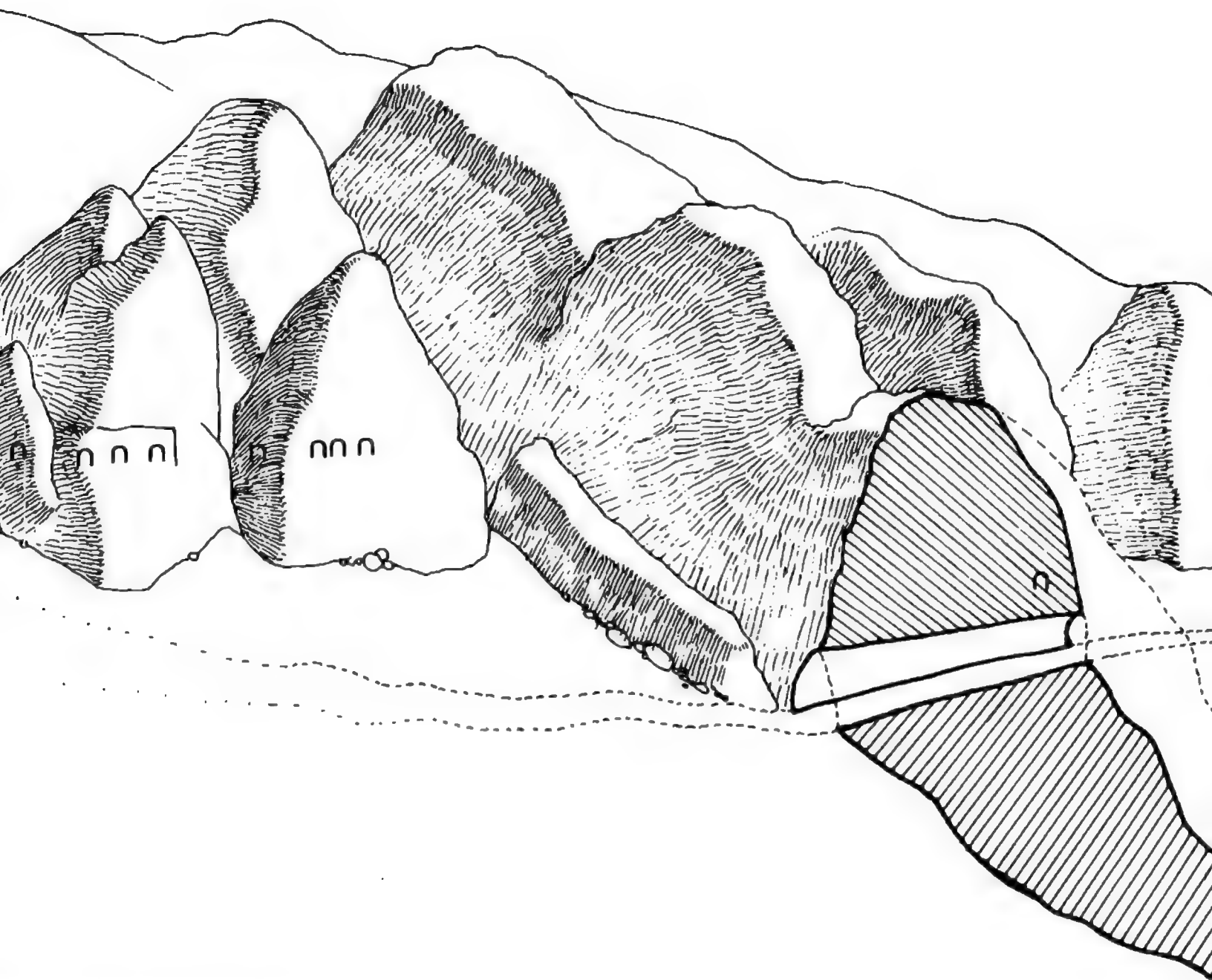


Fig. 72. Bayak, sketch of the massif.

THE CAVES ALONG THE DARYĀ-YE ALWADĀ AND BEYOND (Figs. 3, 73)

Four sites were visited along the uppermost course of the Arghandāb proper, which here is known as Daryā-ye Alwadā, and farther upstream as Nāwa-ye Ūlyātū, where the caves are situated. They were not approached following the river upstream from Jāghūrī, but continuing the journey from Hesār along the Ghūjūr-Ūlyātū road. After leaving Lālā Khēl you cross the Kōtal-e Rīg Gardān, 14.2 km from Ghūjūr, from where you descend to the Nāwa-ye Ūlyātū. The pass, not shown on the 1:100,000 map, is spelt Rig Gardun by Bivar (1971: 83-84).

The first site, Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl, is located by the roadside at 3 km from the top of the pass. Proceeding farther upstream, you reach the Bāzār-e Ūlyātū, at 27 km from Ghūjūr. Tapa Zaytūn, one of the largest sites among those that were visited, is situated on the river, 1 km

upstream. Its commanding position in the valley must have made this site the last important halting place before crossing the passes to the lake of Nāwor. It is probably to be identified as the Gharišāh (Ghār-e Shāh) on the 1:100,000 map (Fig. 73). The peak of Kōh-e Khūd is visible from the site to the southeast.

The road then proceeds northwards to the village of Siāhbām, the last locality visited, at 9 km from Tapa Zaytūn. First you pass through the villages of Peshghār and Tormāy, and then the Kōtal-e Khar Gardān, which leads to the Nāwa-ye Shōla. Following the river after passing the Khar Gardān village, you arrive at Qōl-e Mīr, near which there is a group of caves that could not be visited, Kaftar Khāna. The small group of Shotor Ghār is located to the left of the road near the village of Manti. Immediately after, on the right, is the massif of Chōka-ye Harchgīr, where only one cell is opened (Pl. CII.b). At Tōp-e Āhangarān near Siāhbām (Siāhbūme Sughla in the 1:100,000 map) two small caves are hewn out.

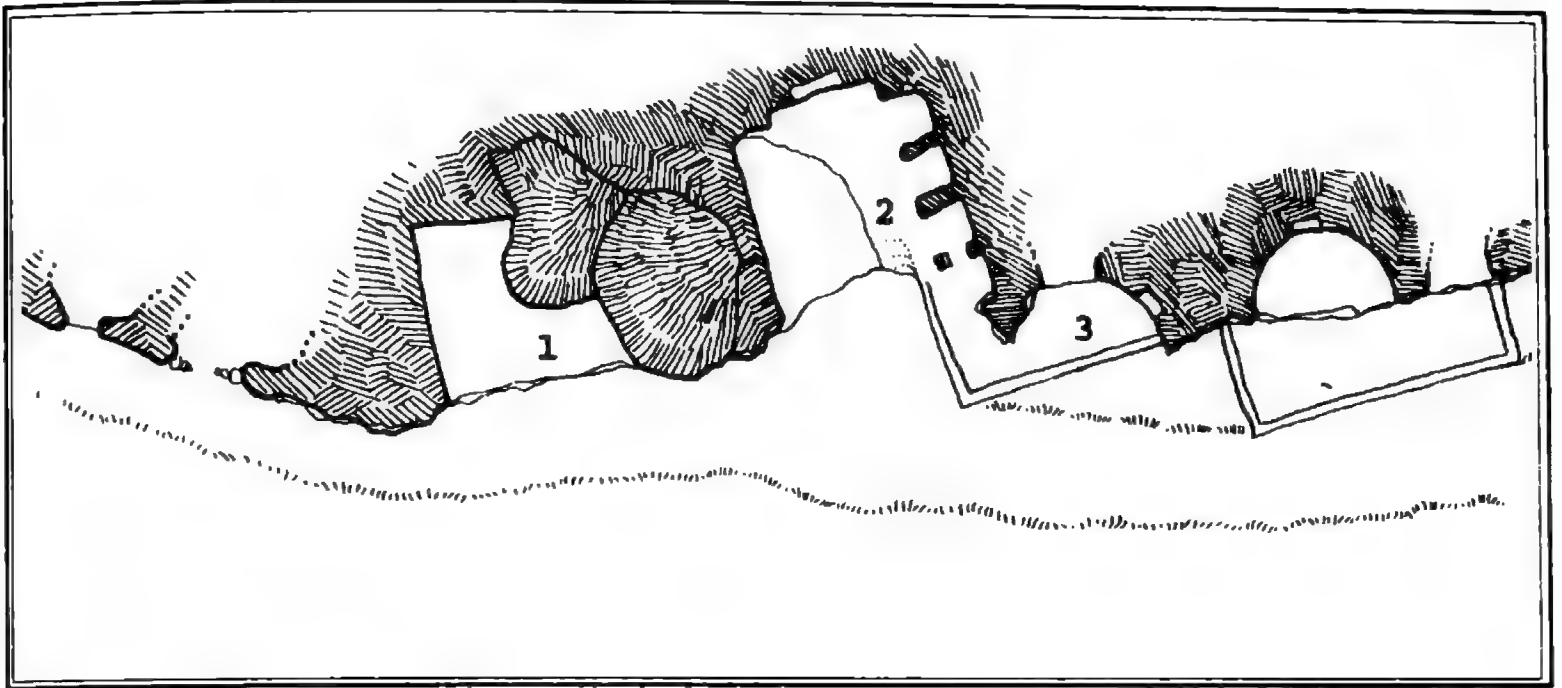


Fig. 74. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. sketch plan.

Cave 2 (Figs. 75-76; Pl. LXXXII.b)

This cave is rectangular in shape, and about 11 m long, 6 m wide. It has slanting walls and a flat ceiling. There is a niche in the back wall, at about 1 m from the ground level, pertaining to the post-monastic phase. On

the right side (the left one is almost totally lost) there are at least four squarish chapels, the first two of which are now intercommunicating. There is a niche on the back side of the first preserved chapel. A modern building conceals the left side of the cave, which was probably never completed.

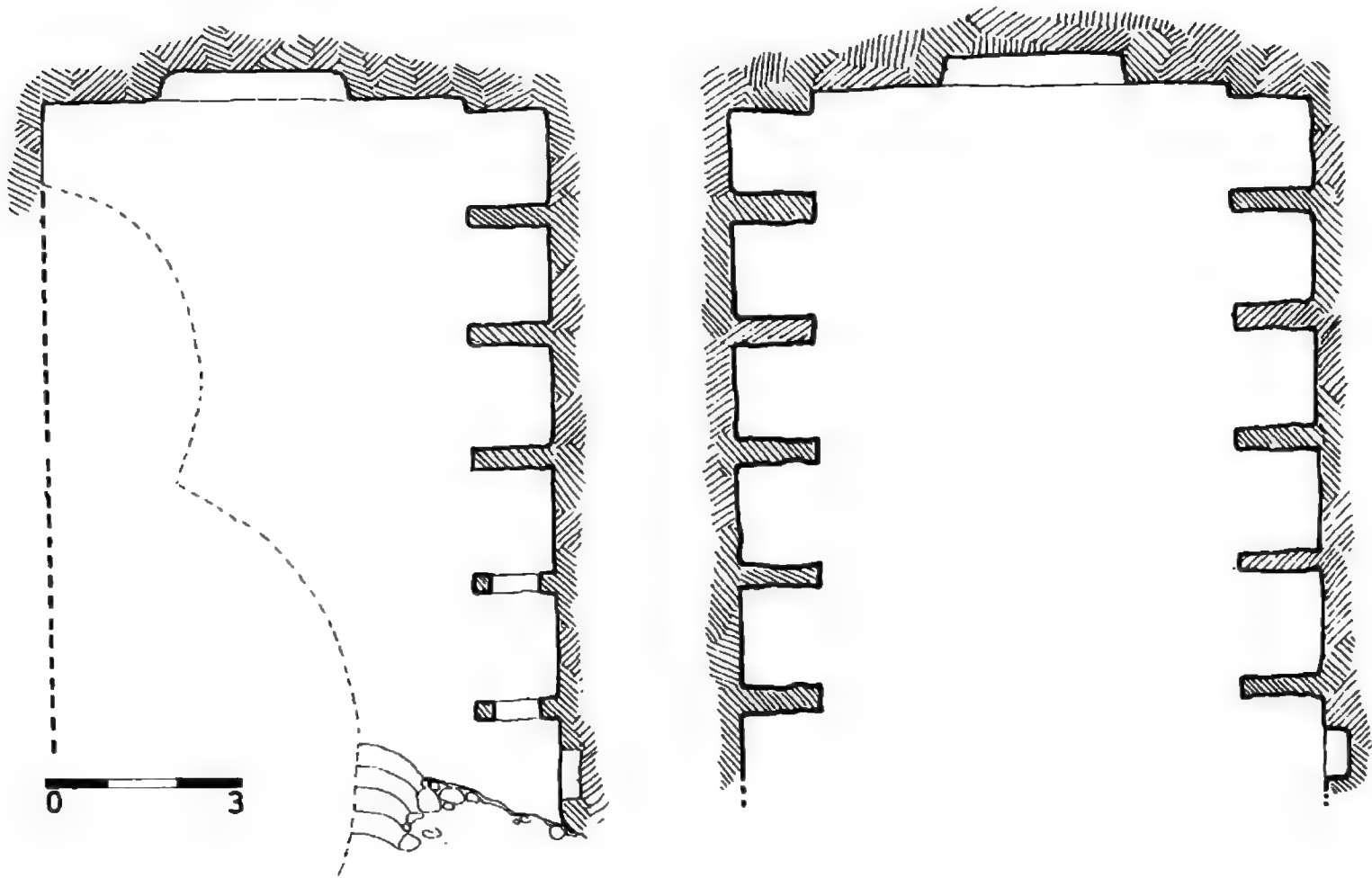


Fig. 75. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl, Cave 2: plan (left) and reconstructed plan (right).

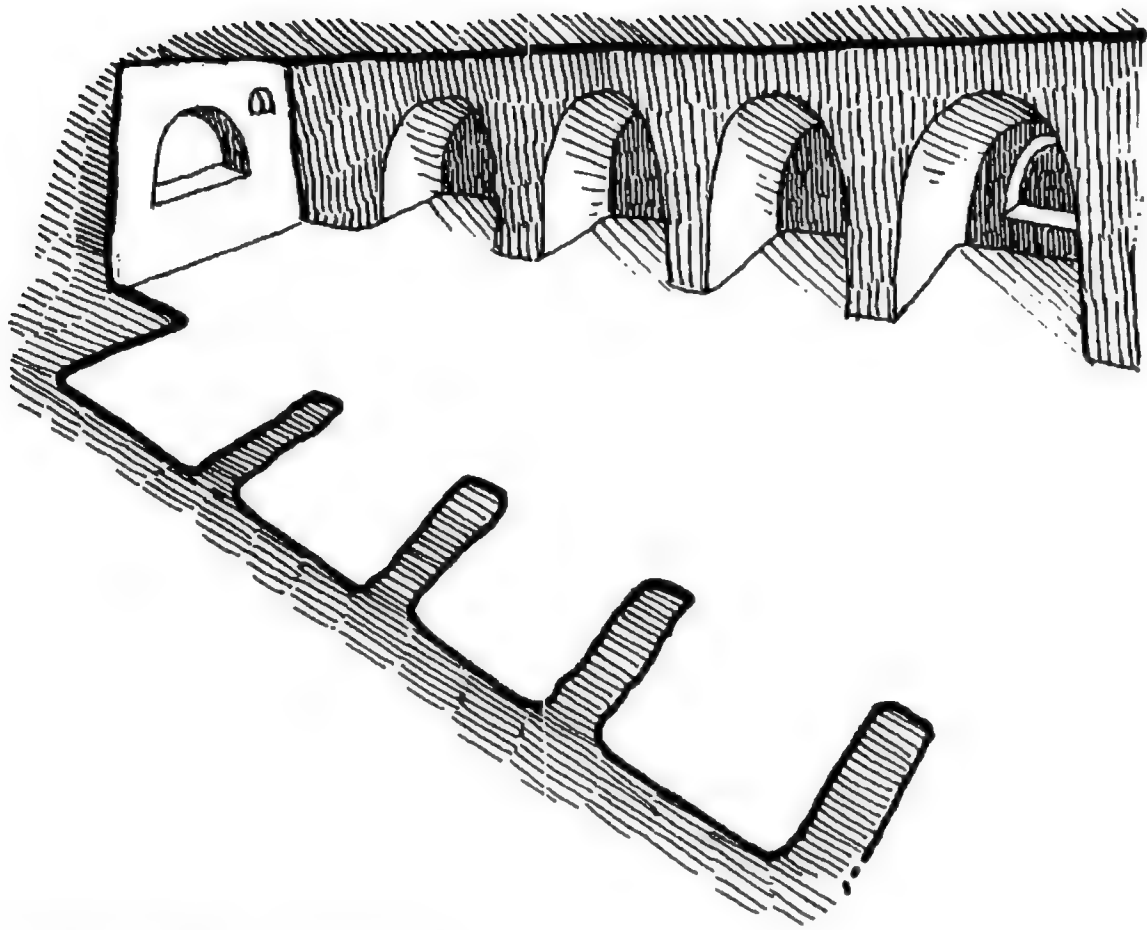


Fig. 76. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl, Cave 2: reconstruction.

Cave 4 (Figs. 77-78; Pls. LXXXIII.b-LXXXIV.a)

Hardly anything remains of this building except a few shapeless stumps of sandstone on which, however, significant traces of decoration were observed in 1976. The first is the remains of a wall decorated with a pattern of concentric rhombs, reminiscent of the remains of painted decoration in Complex B at Kara Tepe (Staviskij 1972: 34). The second is a portion of the back wall, preserving a large circle containing a double-petalled

lotus flower, of which a few leaves survive. To the right, there was also a small niche.

In a corner of the room a *mihrāb* was sculpted in the post-monastic phase.

Cave 5 (Fig. 79; Pl. LXXXIV.b, c)

Originally a square (?) chamber with a flat ceiling, in its present state of preservation the cave measures 7 × 3 m. The front part of the room has totally collapsed. The



Fig. 77. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl, sketch of Cave 4.

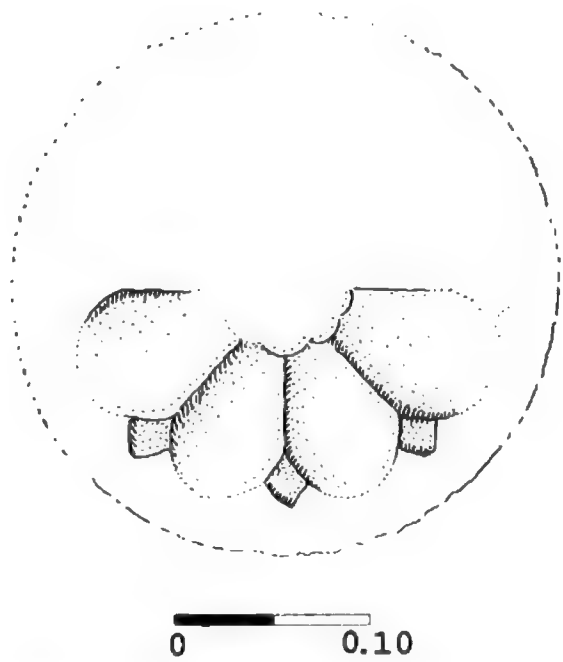


Fig. 78. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl, Cave 4: lotus flower decoration.

remains of two pillars, rectangular in section (0.6×0.7 m) are still extant. Two more pillars at least must have stood in the front part of the cave. A niche 1.75 m high, 2.5 m wide and 0.6 m deep, at a height of 1.1 m from the ground, opens at the centre of the back wall, flanked by a smaller one to the left. Two more niches open along the sidewalls.

Clearly inspired by Indian prototypes, this cave can be compared with the one at Shākī Nōka (above).

13. Tapa Zaytūn

This is a very large monastic complex (Pls. LXXXV.a-LXXXVII.b). The southern and western slopes of the massif, situated to the left of the road and of the river proceeding upstream in the direction of Nāwor, have been terraced, and each terrace has several caves opening onto it (Fig. 80). The site has certain similarities with Basāwal (Pl. CXI) and Fōladī (Pl. CX). We explored and plotted some of the caves on the southern side. With the exception of a few small rooms on the Fourth Terrace, probably excavated as monks' dwellings, they were all conceived as sanctuaries. Some of them are among the largest known not only in Afghanistan, but also in the whole of Central Asia. The caves facing south are in a very poor state due to landslides that have carried away a substantial part of them. It is probable that the majority of the monks' dwellings were located in that part of the massif.

The most remarkable aspects of this site are the gigantic scale on which it was planned and the fact that almost all the caves were left unfinished — a fact important for the purposes of establishing a chronology (Chapter 4)⁽²³⁾.

First and Second Terraces

A cave and a large niche were observed on the First Terrace.

Cave 1 (c. $3.5 \times 5.5 \times 5$ m) has slanting sidewalls and flat ceiling (Pl. LXXXVIII.a).

Parabolic *Niche 2* (Fig. 81; Pl. LXXXVIII.b), to the right, is the only of its kind in the region, and was designed to house an image which could be directly approached by the devotees. It is 5 m wide and c. 2 m deep, and was probably c. 8 m high. Evidence of how the walls were worked can be seen in the upper part. This consists of two parts: the first, vertical section bears marks of working with a small pickaxe; above this the surface slopes at about 45° , projecting over the lower part by about 50 cm and thus protecting the niche and image housed there from the flow of meteoric waters.

Cave 3 (Fig. 82; Pl. LXXXIX.a)

This cave opens higher up in the massif, on the Second Terrace. It is the largest of the whole complex and in a good state of repair but for a breach in the left-

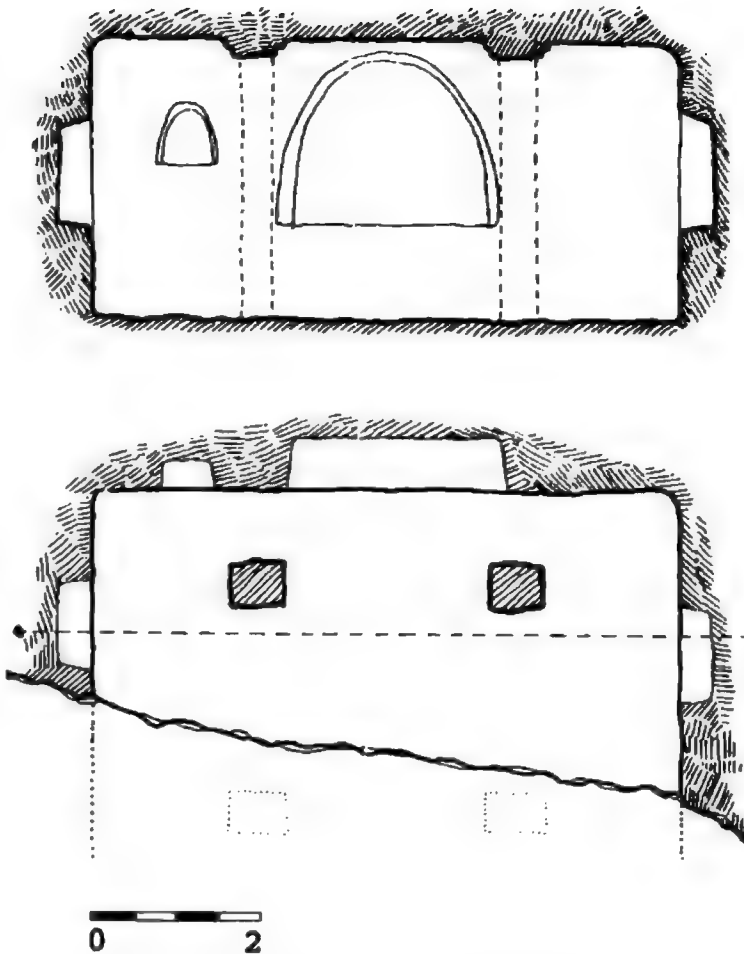


Fig. 79. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Cave 5: plan and section.

hand wall. It is roughly rectangular in shape, 31 m long, 8 m wide. The ceiling rises to a height of 4.5 m. and is flat. A large bench 1.5 m high and 1.5 m wide runs along the two longer walls, and an even larger bench (2.7×0.7 m) runs along the back wall. As we have seen, these 'benches' — too large and high to have any cultic function — were spared during the construction process to facilitate the excavation work, and were to be removed once excavation was completed. The first three niches along the right-hand side and the first two on the opposite side have a square plan and are rectangular, and open at the 'bench' level; three more niches along the left wall are semicircular in plan and are set higher up in the wall. Originally there were probably five of them, two of which excavated where now there is the large breach. A smaller, semicircular niche can be seen on the right wall.

Two rectangular doors open at either side of the entrance, giving access, on the right, to a long, flat-vaulted corridor (*Cave 3a*) that turns left and can be followed for about 6 m. There must have been a symmetrical corridor to the left of the entrance.

⁽²³⁾ The numeration of the caves has been changed with respect to the preliminary report published in Taddei & Verardi (1984: drawing 11; 1985a).

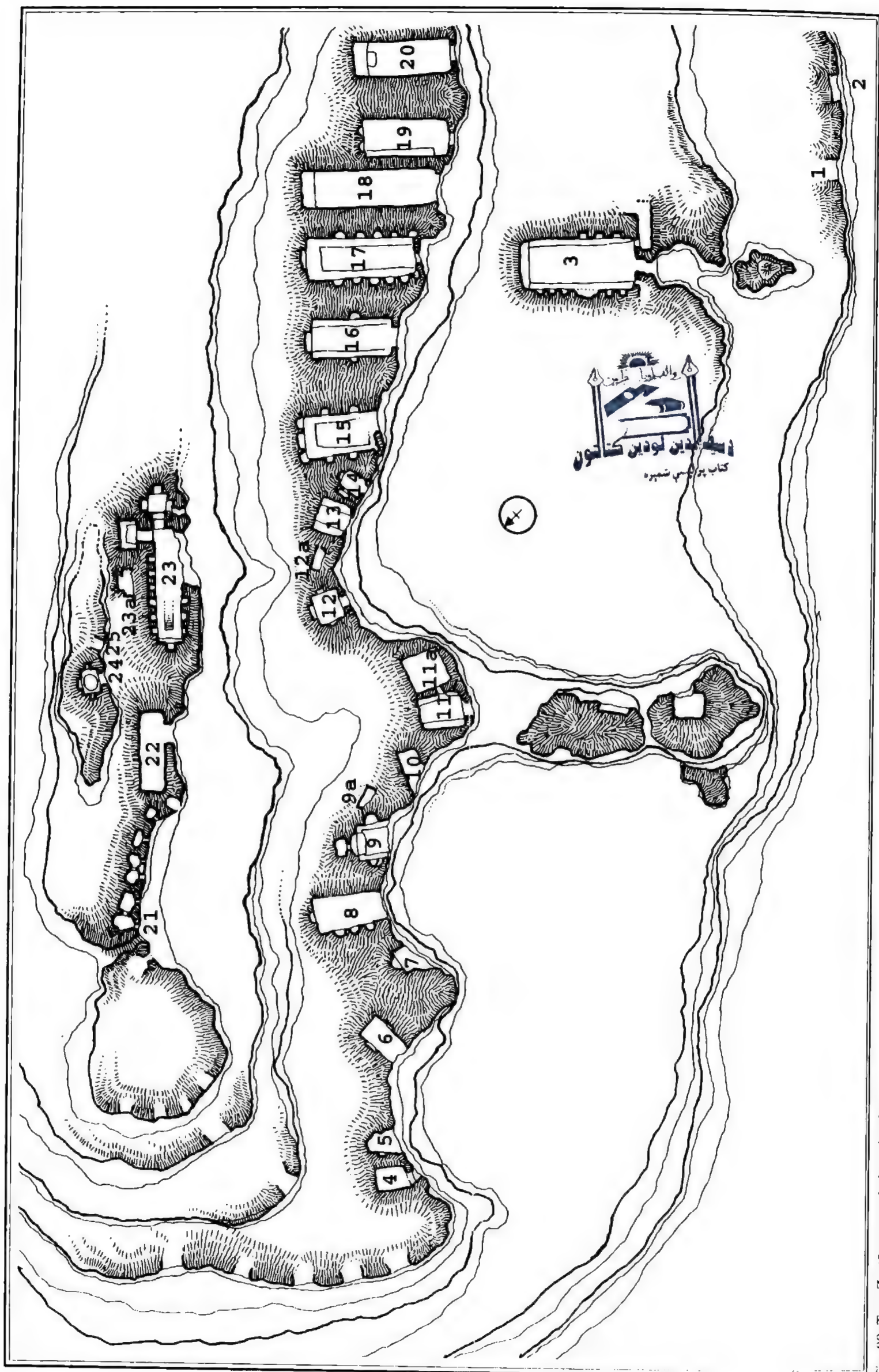


Fig. 80. Tapa Zaytūn, general plan (sketch).

One or more niches would have been opened along the sidewalls had the work been brought to an end, as in Cave 17 on the Third Terrace, and a large niche (if not a sanctum as in Cave 23 on the Fourth Terrace) had certainly been planned in the back wall.

Third Terrace (Pl. LXXXIX.b)

This terrace shows an irregular profile, with projections and recesses. Twenty-two caves open here (*Cave 9b* is at an upper level above *Cave 9*), all of which are either large sanctuaries or chapels. A few caves open on the left side of a spur of the rock protruding towards the river, situated at the same level as the caves along the main wall.

Caves 6, 8, 15-20 (Figs. 83-90; Pls. XCI.a-XCII.b)

Six rectangular caves (nos. 15-20), similar in plan to *Cave 3* on the First Terrace, open on the right side of the terrace; *Caves 6* and *8* on the left side, can be added to

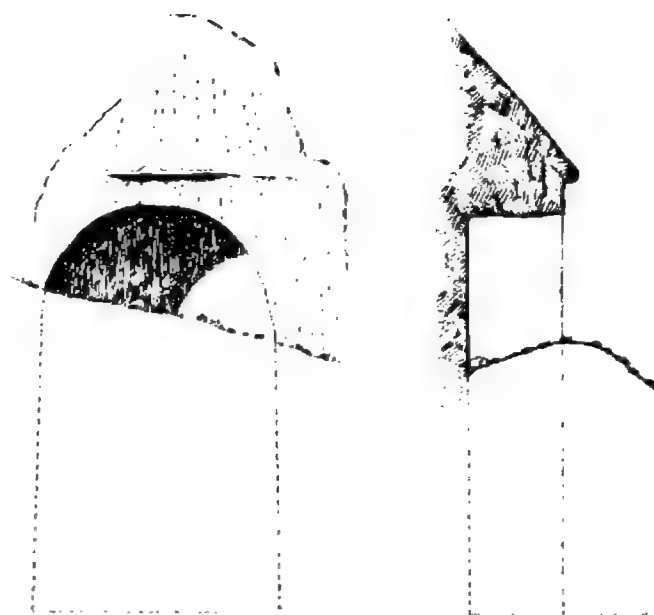


Fig. 81. Tapa Zaytūn, Niche 2 (sketch).

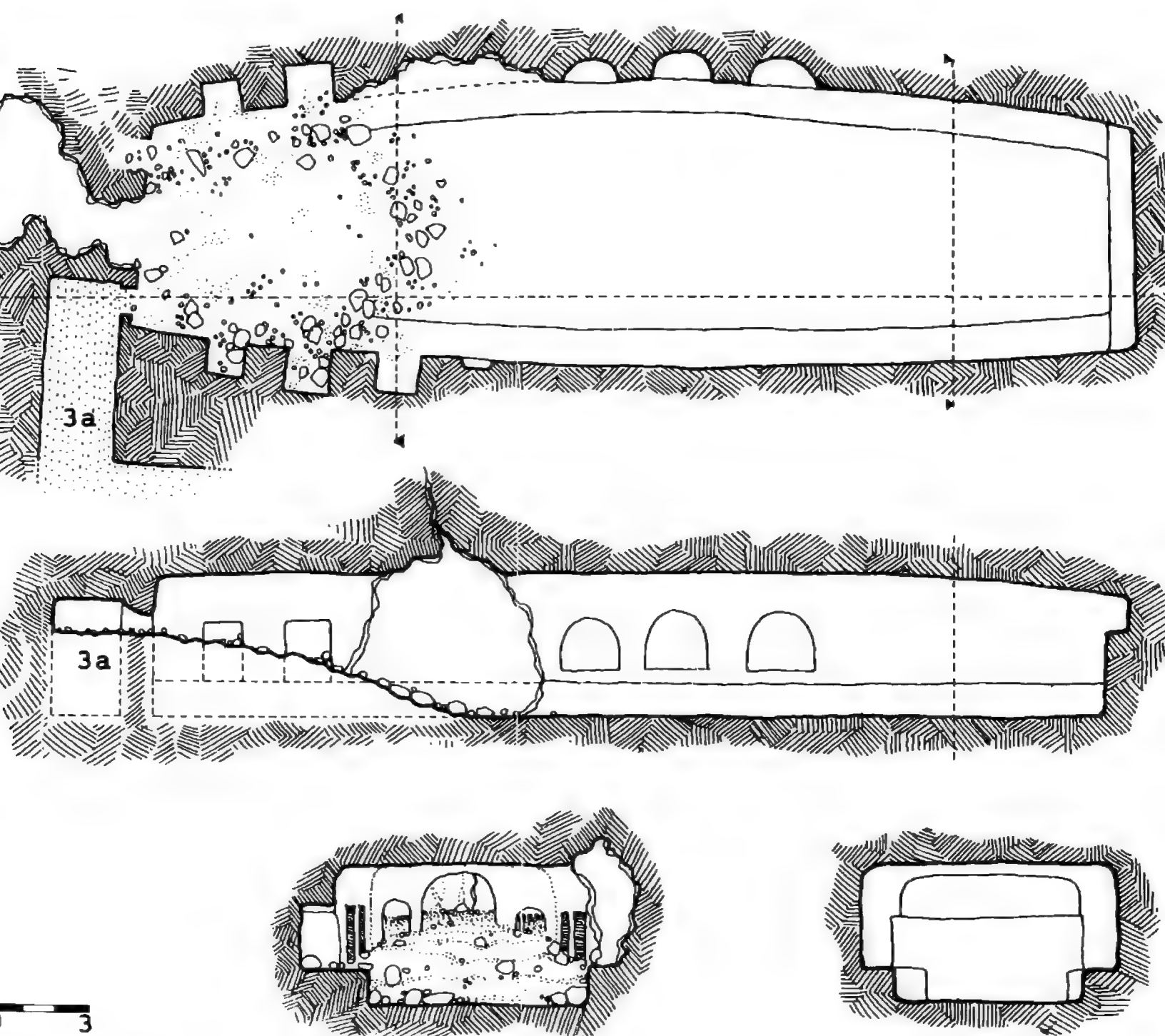


Fig. 82. Tapa Zaytūn. Caves 3, 3a: plan and sections.

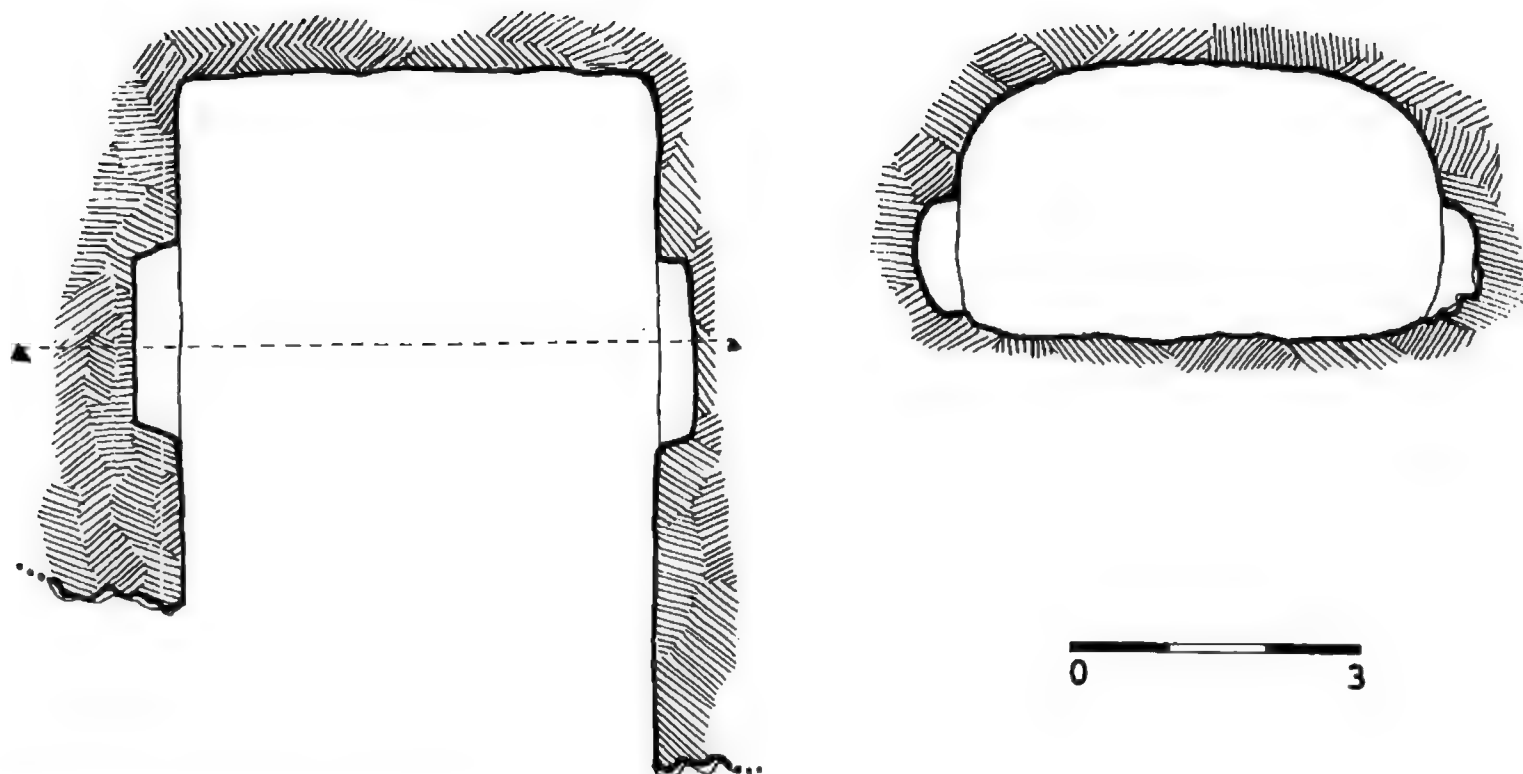


Fig. 83. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 6: plan and section..

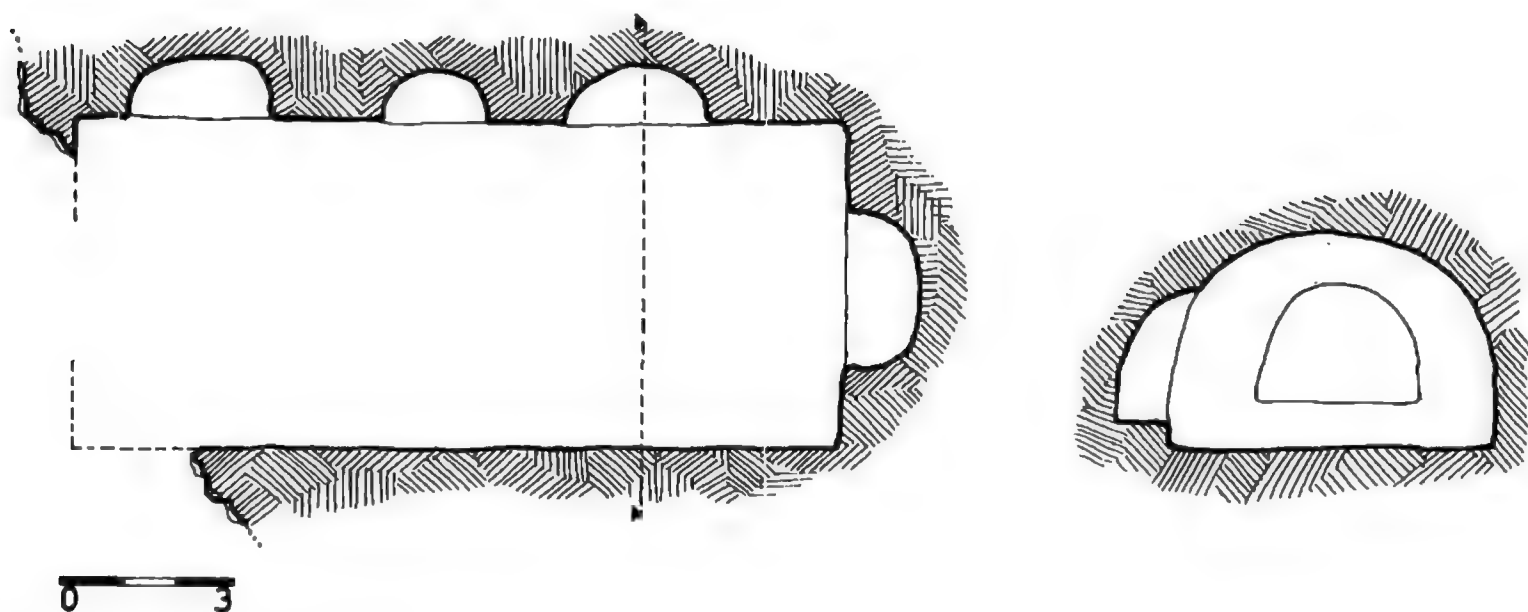


Fig. 84. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 8: plan and section.

them for typological reasons. The ceilings of these caves are flat, with side walls forming rounded corners at the junction (*Caves 16, 18, 19, 20*), or rounded off (*Caves 8, 17*). Some of the caves have large, unremoved 'benches' along the walls.

Cave 15 and *Cave 17* were almost completed, as appears from the number and symmetry of the niches opened on the side and back walls. Peculiar traits are the niches opening at the corners of the entrance wall, which are, in all likelihood, original. *Cave 15* had three niches on the back-side wall, one of which very large — an actual room measuring c. 2.2×2.8 m. The corresponding niche to the right was probably left at an earlier

stage of work. The portion of the unremoved 'bench' along the back side is 1 m high and 1.5 m large. The niches along the side walls are slightly raised with respect to the level of the bench.

It is probable that a few more niches were planned along the side walls of *Caves 15* and *16*, while, as to *Caves 18* and *20*, they were left at the first stage of construction.

What had been planned for *Cave 18* and *Cave 19* is an open question, since there was no possibility to create side niches there without breaking through the walls and the niches of the adjacent caves. At the same time, it is hard to imagine that such large rooms as *Cave 18* and

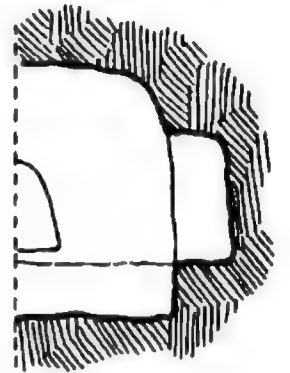
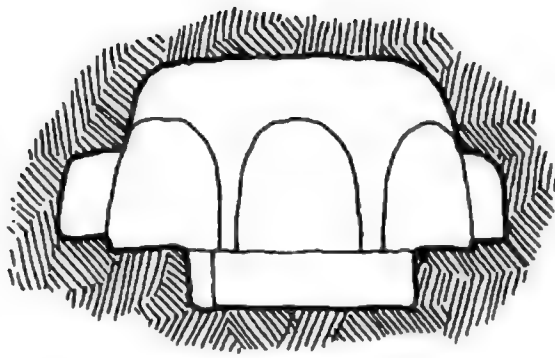
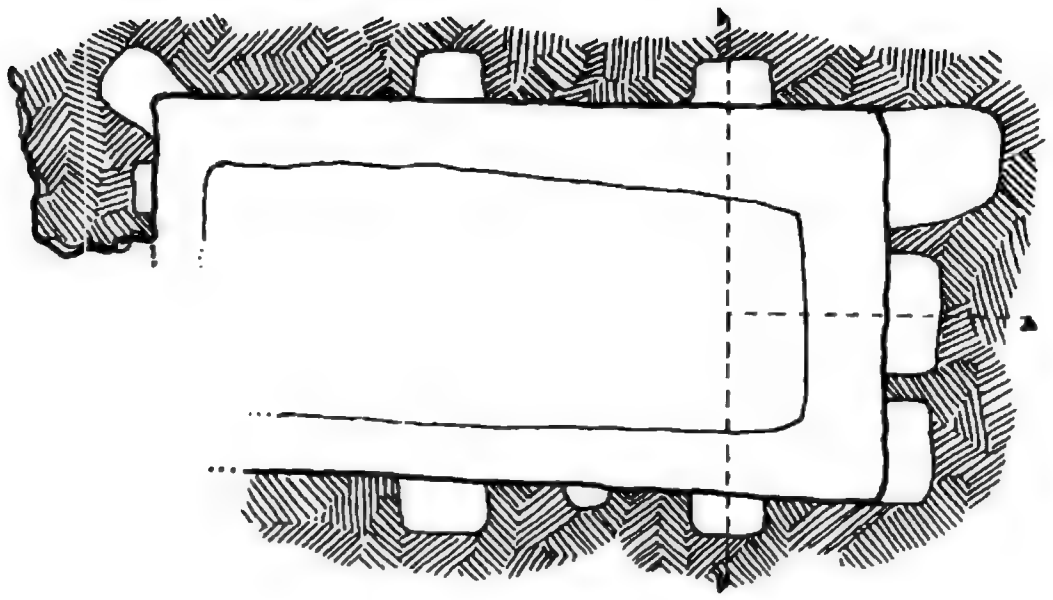
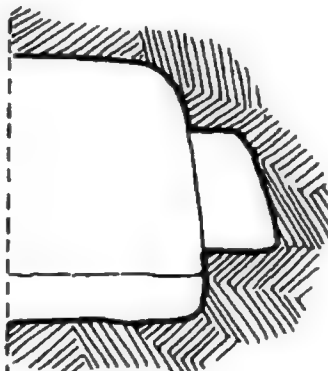
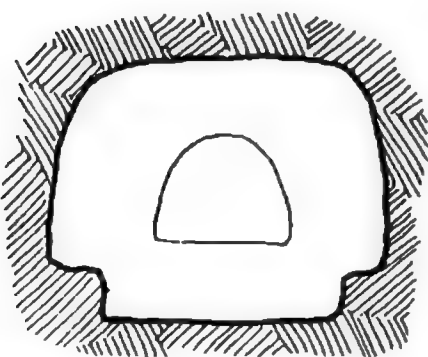
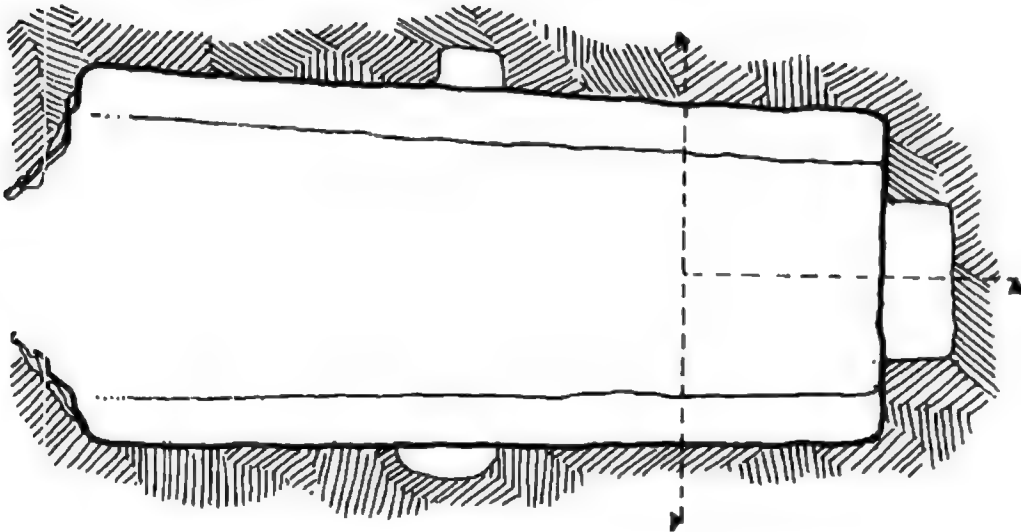


Fig. 85. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 15: plan and sections.

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Fig. 86. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 16: plan and sections.

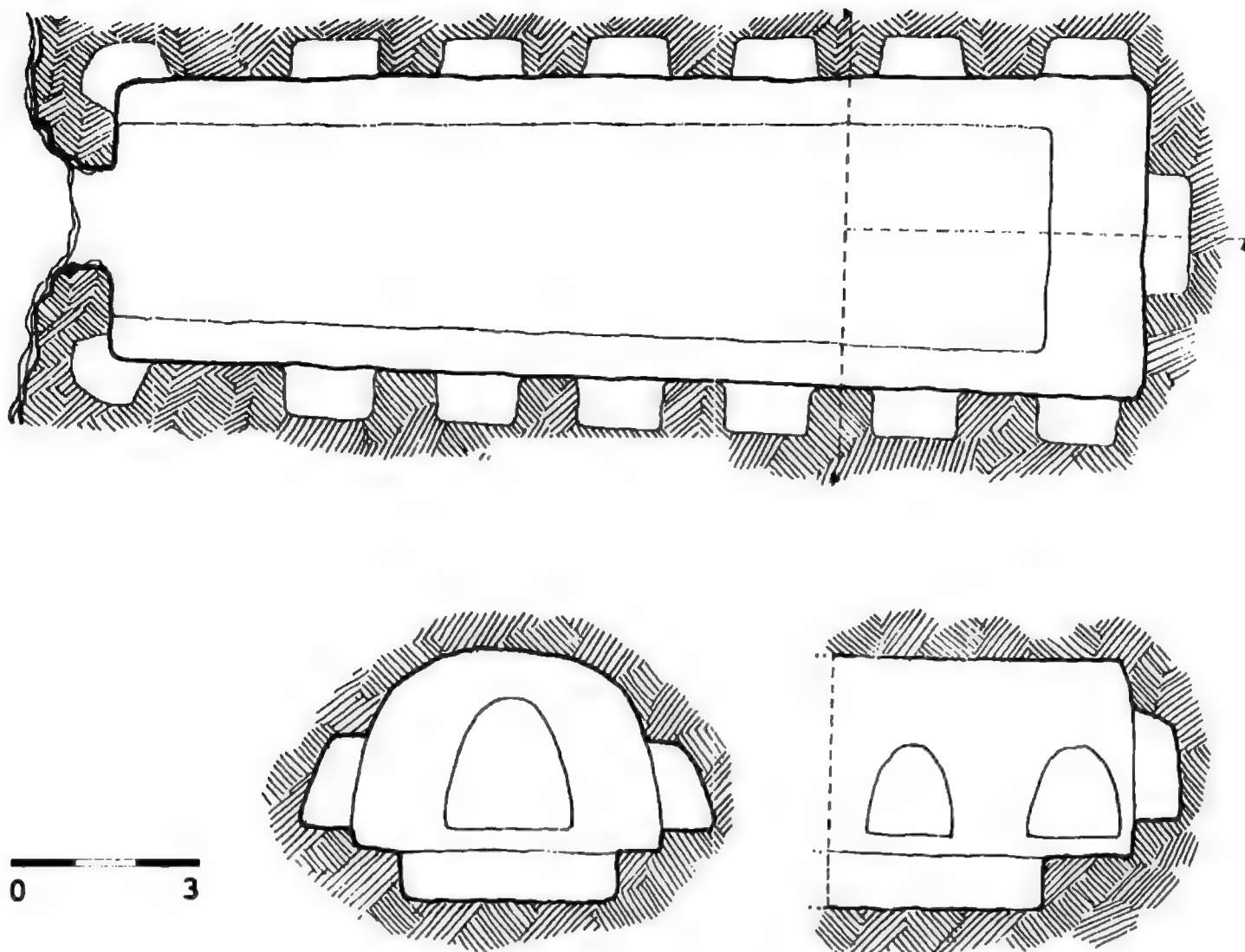


Fig. 87. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 17: plan and sections.

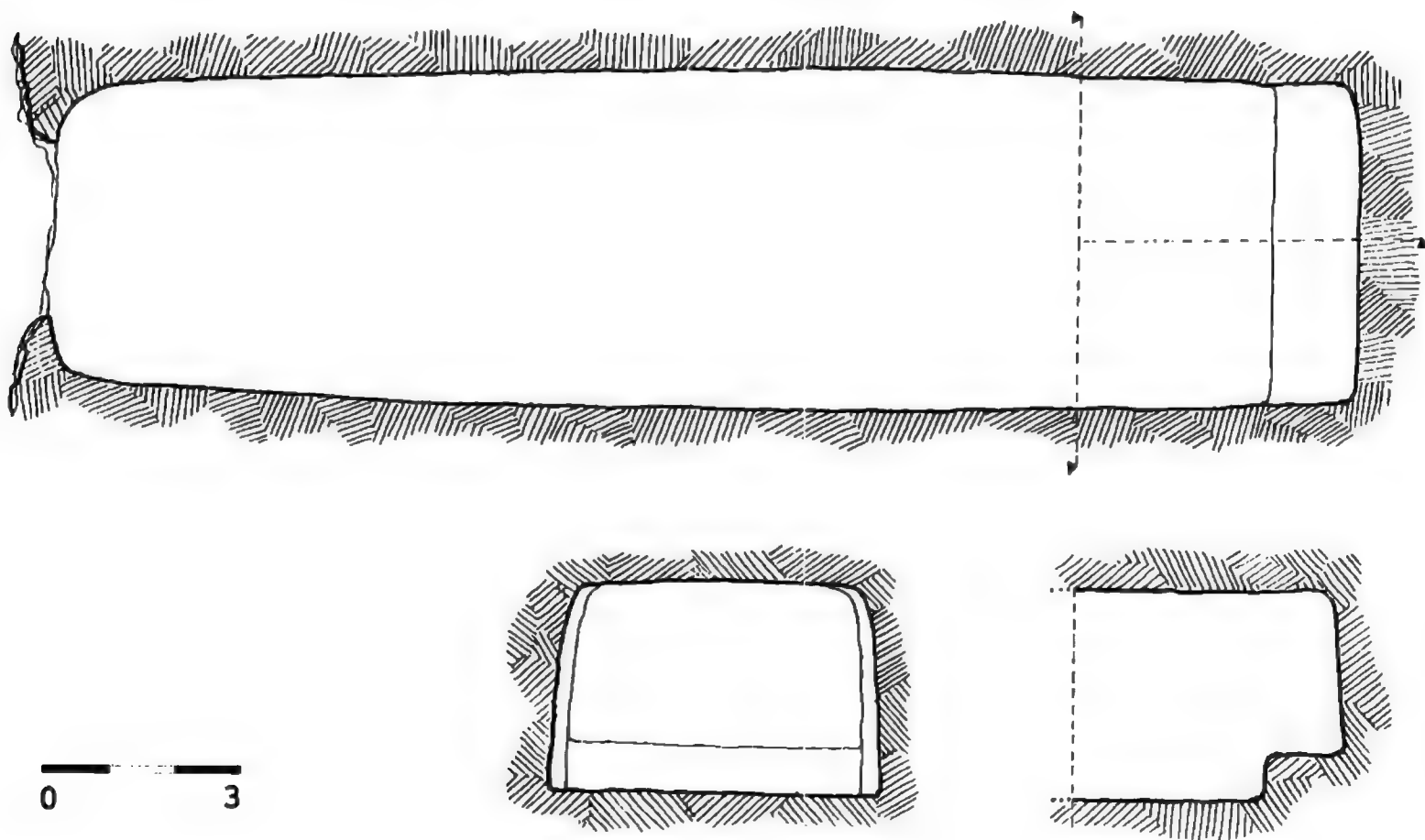


Fig. 88. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 18: plan and sections.

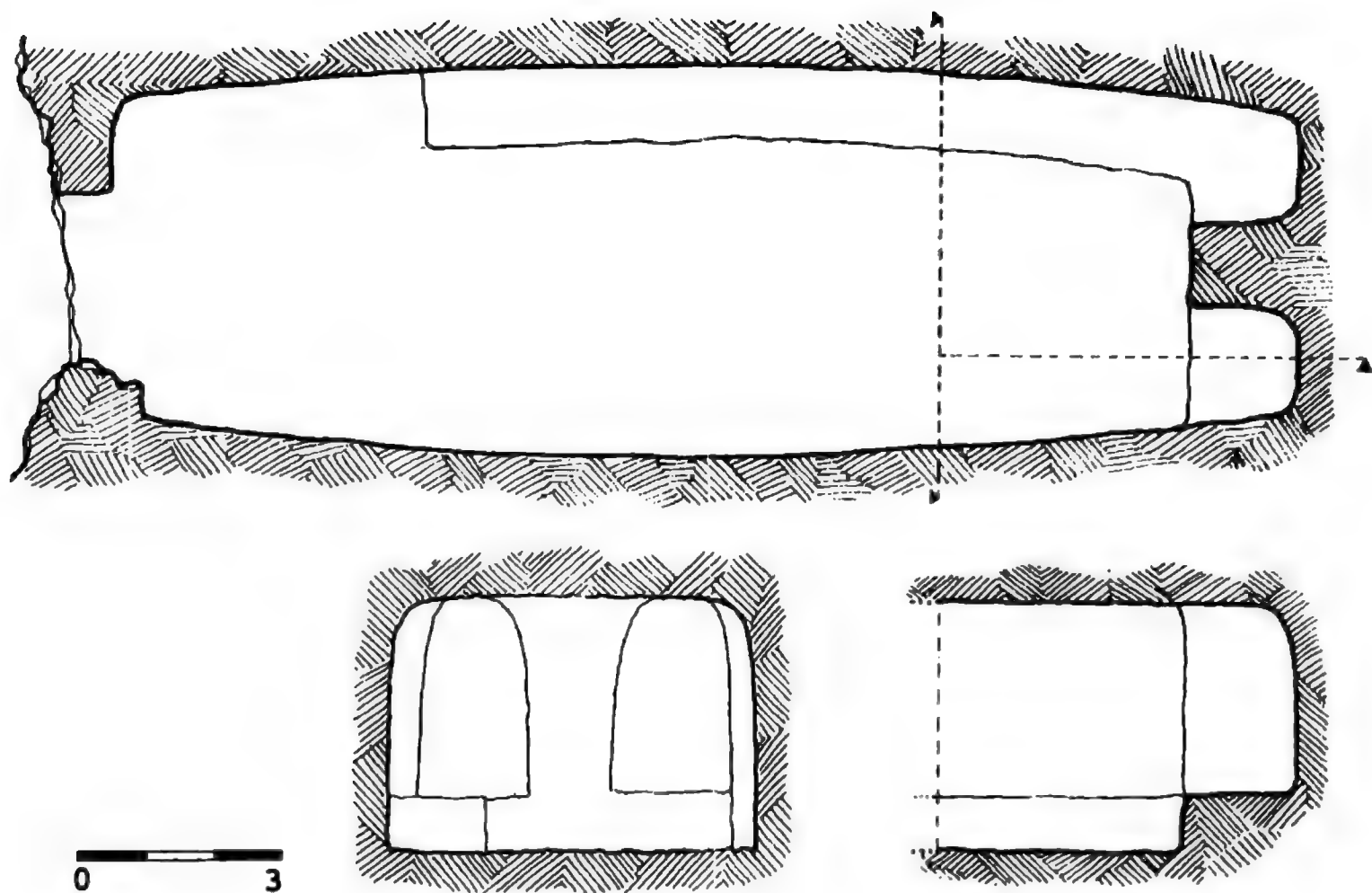


Fig. 89. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 19: plan and sections.

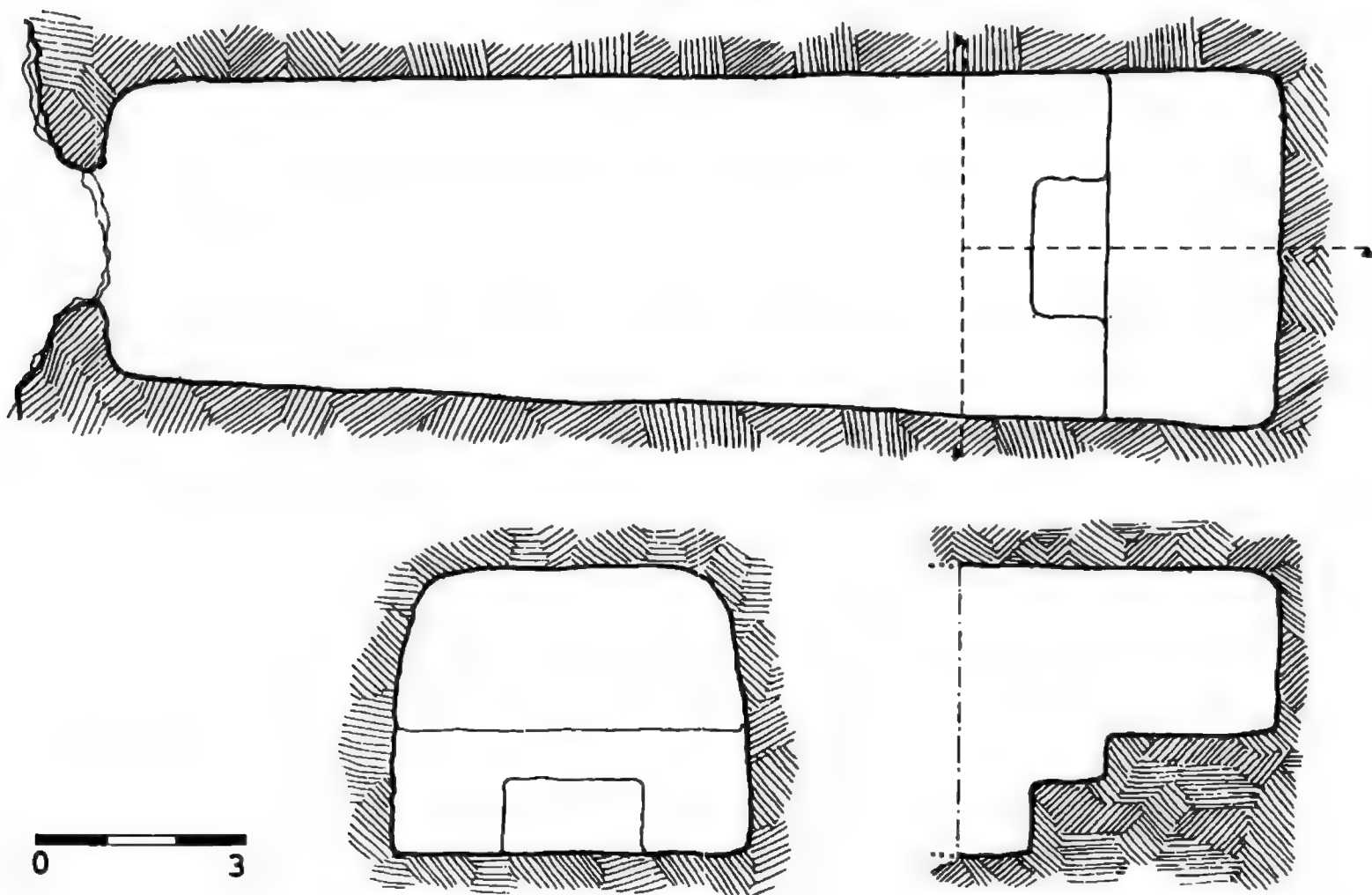


Fig. 90. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 20: plan and sections.

Cave 19 (the first is 21 m long) had been planned without side niches from the outset; more probable is an error in taking the measurements to insert *Cave 18* between *Caves 17* and *19*. When the error was eventually realized, the working bench was removed from the side walls of *Cave 18*, where it was of no use as a working level for excavating the side niches; it was only partly removed in *Cave 19*, where it had been left to complete the niches on the back wall. *Cave 19* provides us with very clear evidence of the real function of the enormous, long 'benches' of the Tapa Zaytūn complex (see more examples below).

Caves 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 11a, 12, 13, 14 (Figs. 91-96)

These caves are square in plan, although there can be some doubts on *Caves 7, 9* and *10* because the front part has collapsed. They have flat or rounded off ceilings 2.5-3 m high. *Caves 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14*, were left unfinished.

Cave 4 has an irregularly rectangular plan and barrel vault.

Cave 9 measures, at present, 4 × 5 m and is covered by a lowered barrelled vault. A dais 0.7 m high, 0.8 m wide and 0.8 m deep is situated at the back of the room.

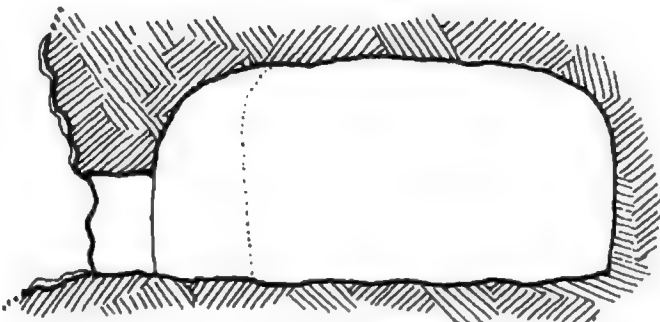
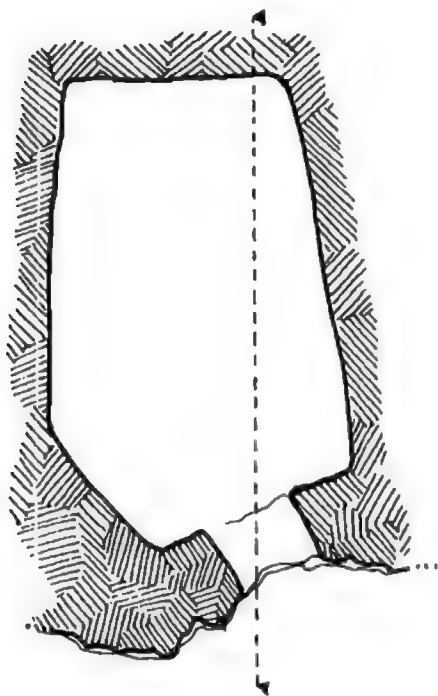


Fig. 91. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 4: plan and section.

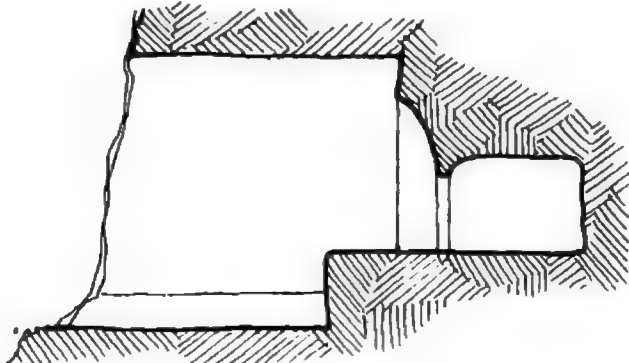
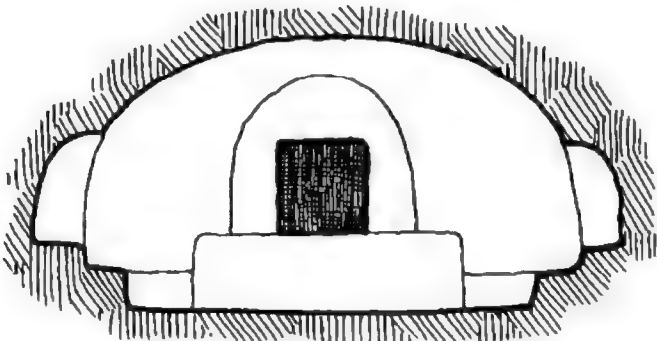
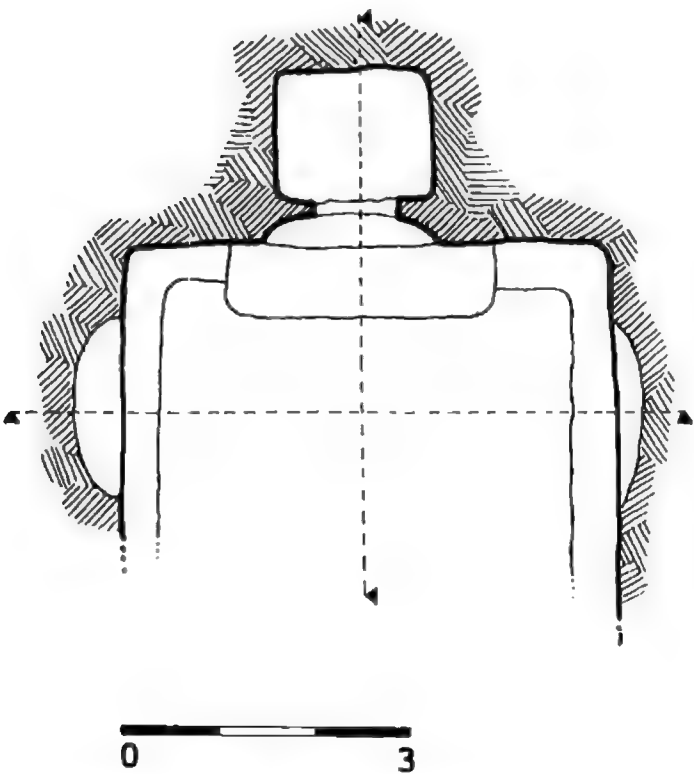
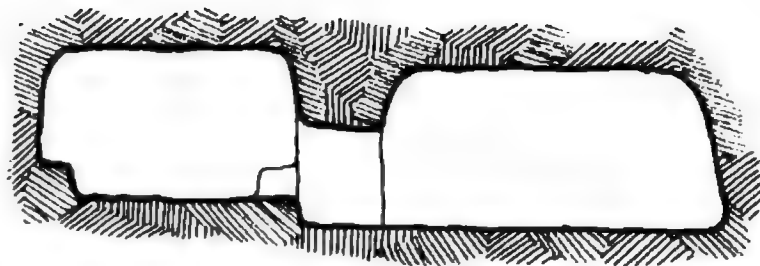
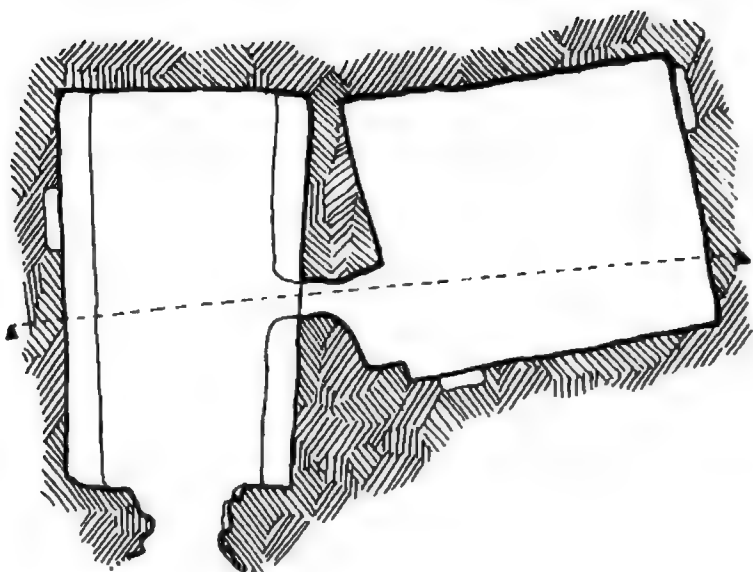
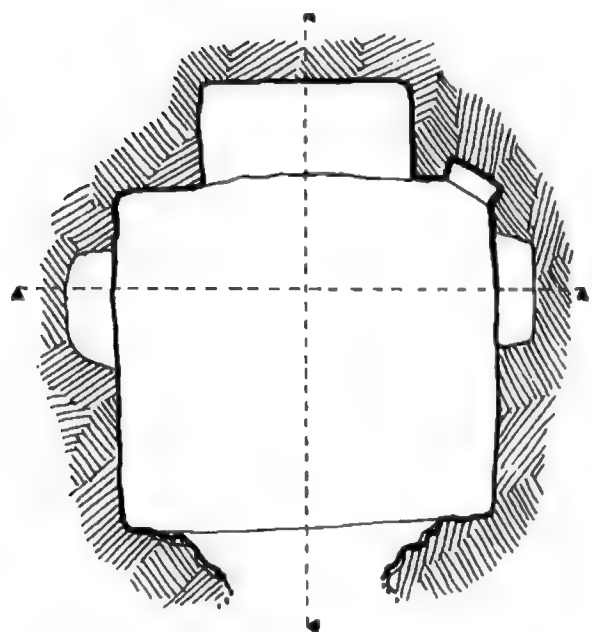


Fig. 92. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 9: plan and sections.



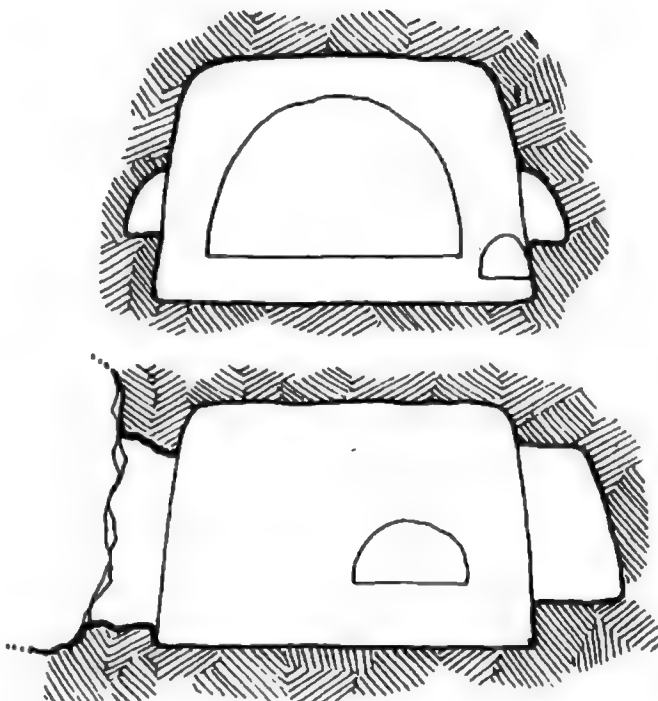
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Fig. 93. Tapa Zaytūn, Caves 11, 11a: plan and section.



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Fig. 94. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 12: plan and sections.



The 'bench', 0.5 m high and 0.5 m wide, running along the walls was not removed. Three niches opened at the level of the dais. During a phase of reuse, the central one was broken through by means of a square door (1 × 0.9 m), leading to a small inner sanctuary, probably not included in the original plan.

That *Caves 11* and *13* are unfinished can be seen from the bench-like portions of the rock that were not removed. On the right side of *Cave 11* (where there is a niche on the left side) you enter *Cave 11a*, which is situated at a lower level. It has two small niches, one on the right side wall, the second on the back side wall.

Cave 12 (Pl. XC.a-c) measures 3.7 × 4.2 m and has a parabolic ceiling 3.2 m high. Three large, deep niches

open on three side walls, 0.7 m from the floor. They are 2.1 m wide, while the niche on the back wall is much deeper than the other two, measuring m 1.4. The segment of arch at the top is doubled by a hollowed-out band.

Cave 14 has a large niche in the back side wall. An opening on the left wall leads to a small, irregularly shaped lumber-room situated at a higher level than the main cave.

As pointed out above, the arrangement of this group of caves (and in particular the long, rectangular ones) is strongly reminiscent of the Caves of Area E at Basāwal (Pl. CXI). Here, *Cave 130*, which is square in plan, preserves traces of paintings.

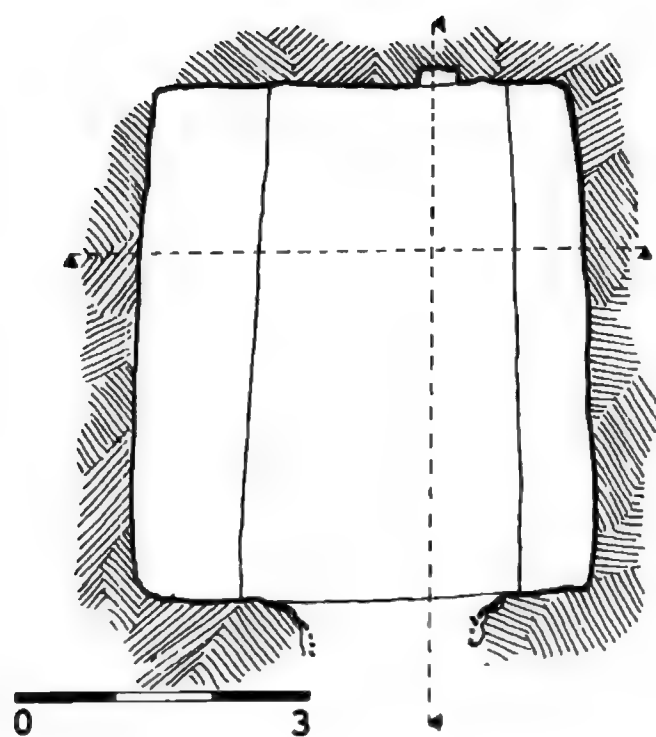


Fig. 95. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 13: plan and sections.

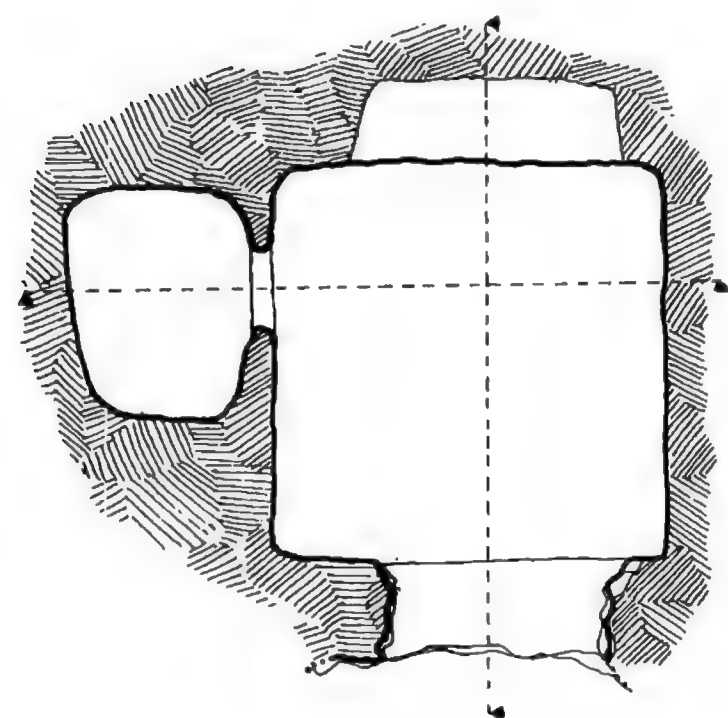
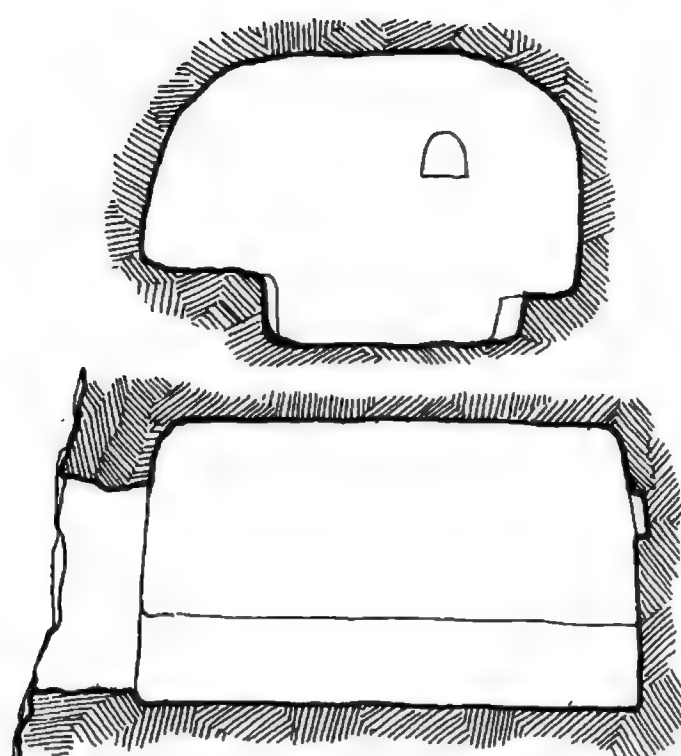


Fig. 96. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 14: plan and sections.

Fourth Terrace

This includes two large caves and fourteen small rooms in three superimposed levels, probably meant as monks' dwellings.

Caves 21a-n (Fig. 97; Pl. XCIII)

These are small cells, rectangular in plan and entered by rectangular doors, now irregularly enlarged. Some of them (21 c-f) still show the slots for the wooden beams to

fix the doors. They are arranged on three levels, and the upper ones were originally accessed by means of a stairway leading to a narrow passage cut into the rock and then turning left.

Of the caves visited on the third level, the original ones are *Caves 21m* and *21n*, rectangular in plan (2.8×4.5 and 2.5×4.5 m respectively). *Cave 21l* was re-worked and made to communicate with *Cave 21m* during the phase of reuse, and the same happened with *Cave 21k*, which communicates with *Cave 21j*, which is roundish in form and may not be contemporary with the monastic phase.

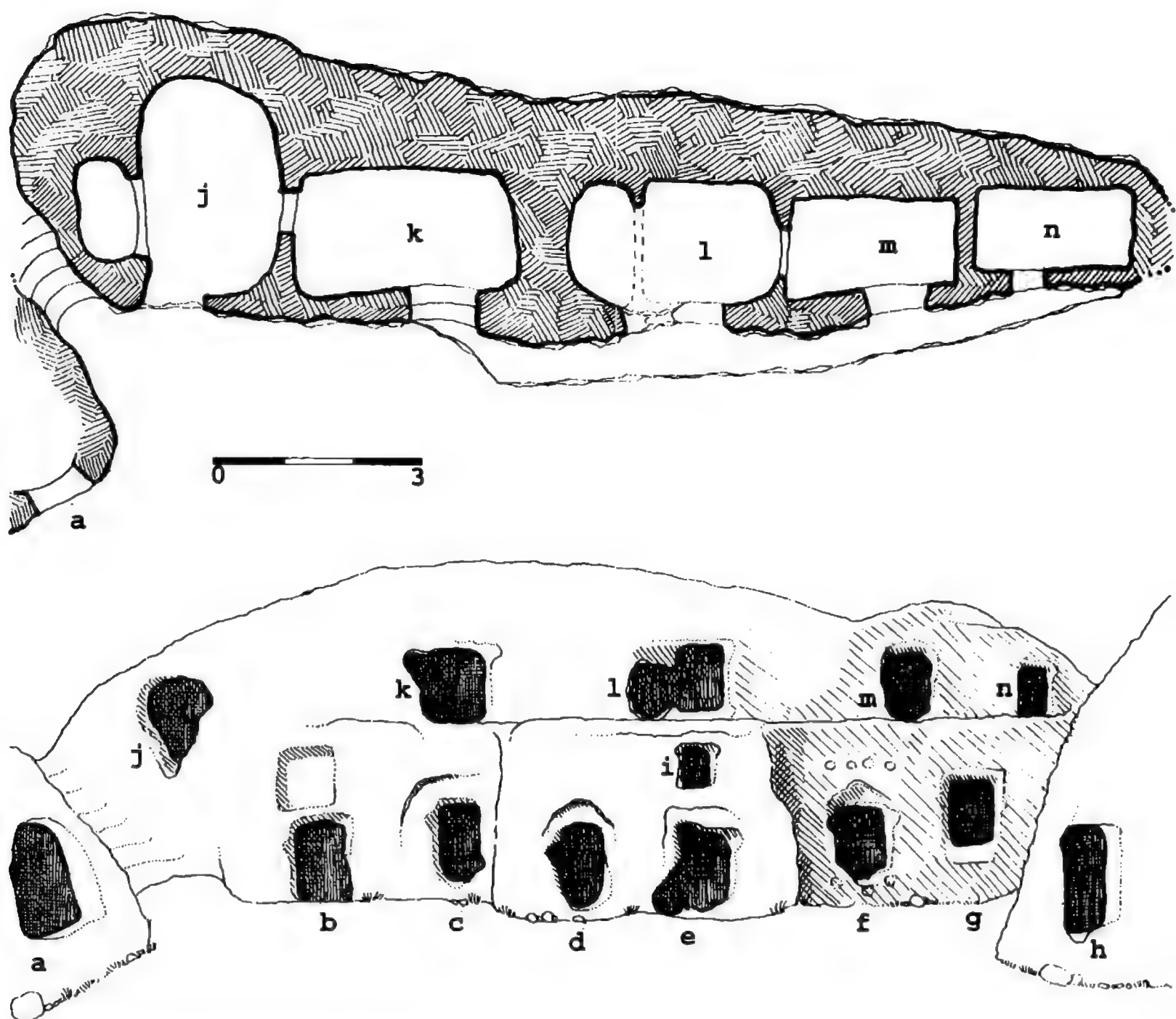


Fig. 97. Tapa Zaytūn, Caves 21a-n: plan and prospect.

Cave 22 (Pl. XCIV)

This cave is rectangular, and apparently left at the first stage of construction, like *Cave 20* on the Third Terrace. It is oriented N-S like *Cave 23*.

Cave 23 (Figs. 98-99; Pls. XCV.a, c, XCVI-XCVII)

This cave is 32 m long, 6 m wide and covered by a barrelled vault starting at the level of a string course jutting out for c. 50 cm along the side walls so as to reduce the span to be covered. The height of the cave varies from 5 to 8.5 m. The cave is oriented north-south, unlike the caves with a similar plan on the Second Terrace. A large portion of the eastern wall has collapsed, and the cave is now entered from this breach.

The cave is unusual in many respects. Along the western side open six very large, parabolic-vaulted niches ($1.3 \times 1.3 \times 0.9$ m) starting from near ground level. The upper part of the arch is doubled by a deep-set,

concentric band. Only three niches survive in the eastern sidewall, which must have corresponded to the front wall. Quite a huge niche, almost 2.9 m deep, opens on the southern wall at a height of 2 m. In the opposite wall, to the north, opens a sanctum, square in plan ($2.5 \times 2.5 \times 2.2$ m) and domed. Three large niches with deep-set decorative bands (the decoration was never completed) open on its three walls. Since the sanctum is half filled with earth, it could not be established whether the niches started from the ground level or not. Another small sanctum, entered through a squarish door (2.2×1.5 m) opens at the northern end of the western wall. It is a square chamber left unfinished, where three niches had probably planned along the walls as in the previous case; in fact, a bench-like feature 1 m high and almost 1.2 m wide is present along the sides to allow the workers to excavate them.

An entrance to the cave was by means of the stairway — over 3 m wide and now almost completely filled with earth and stones — which comes from below at a

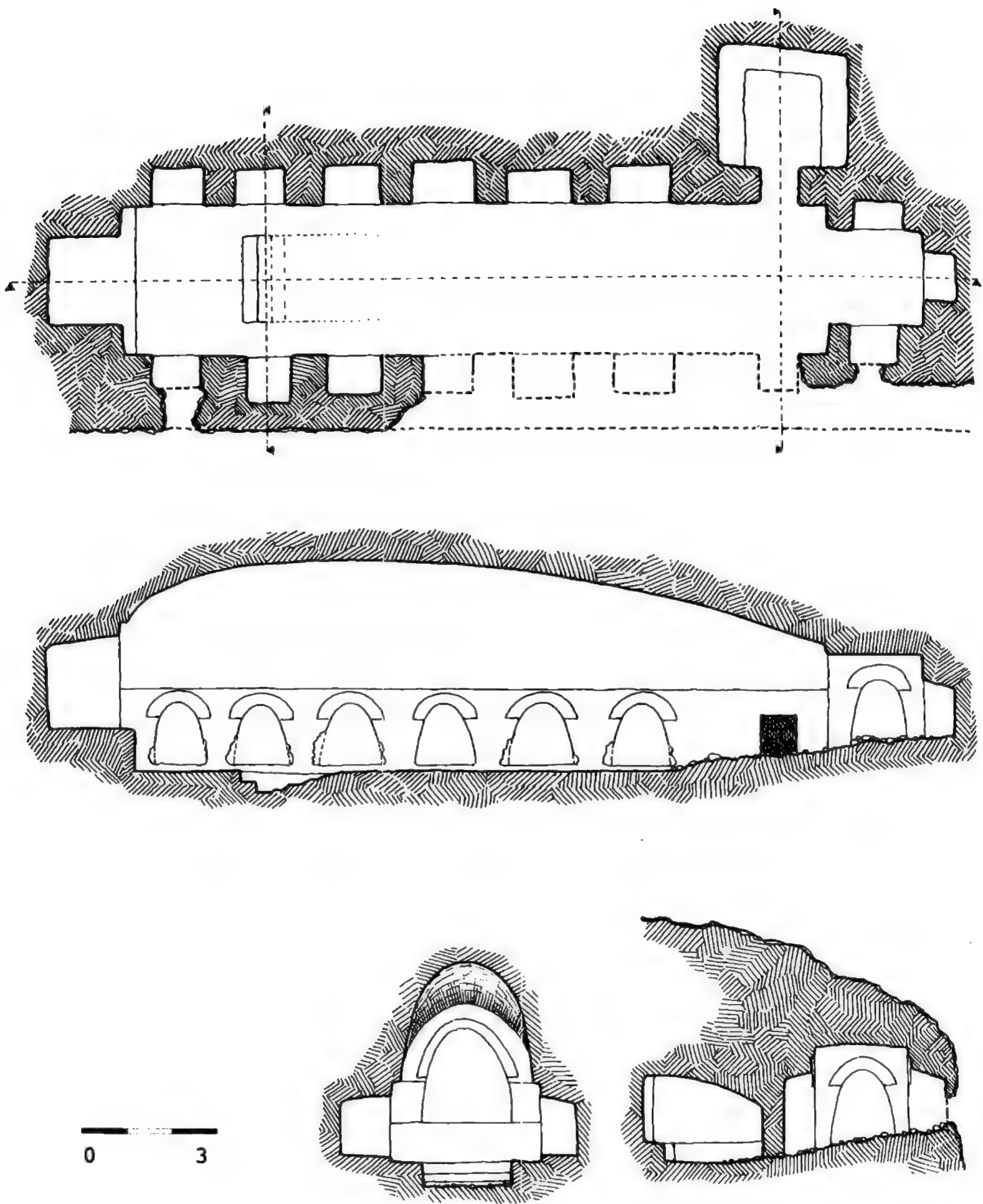


Fig. 98. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 23: plan and sections.

distance of 4.5 m from the south wall and 1.5 m from the sidewalls. Two steps were partially cleaned in 1976. Another entrance may have existed on the eastern side, where there is now the large breach.

In addition to the observations made above about the

similarity of such large, rectangular caves with Cave 2 at Haybāk, the presence of a triple sanctum forming a cross at one end of the cave also deserves mention. Cave 14 (the 'Kinnarī-Höhle') at Mingoī near Qizil is an example of this architecture (Pl. CXV.c).

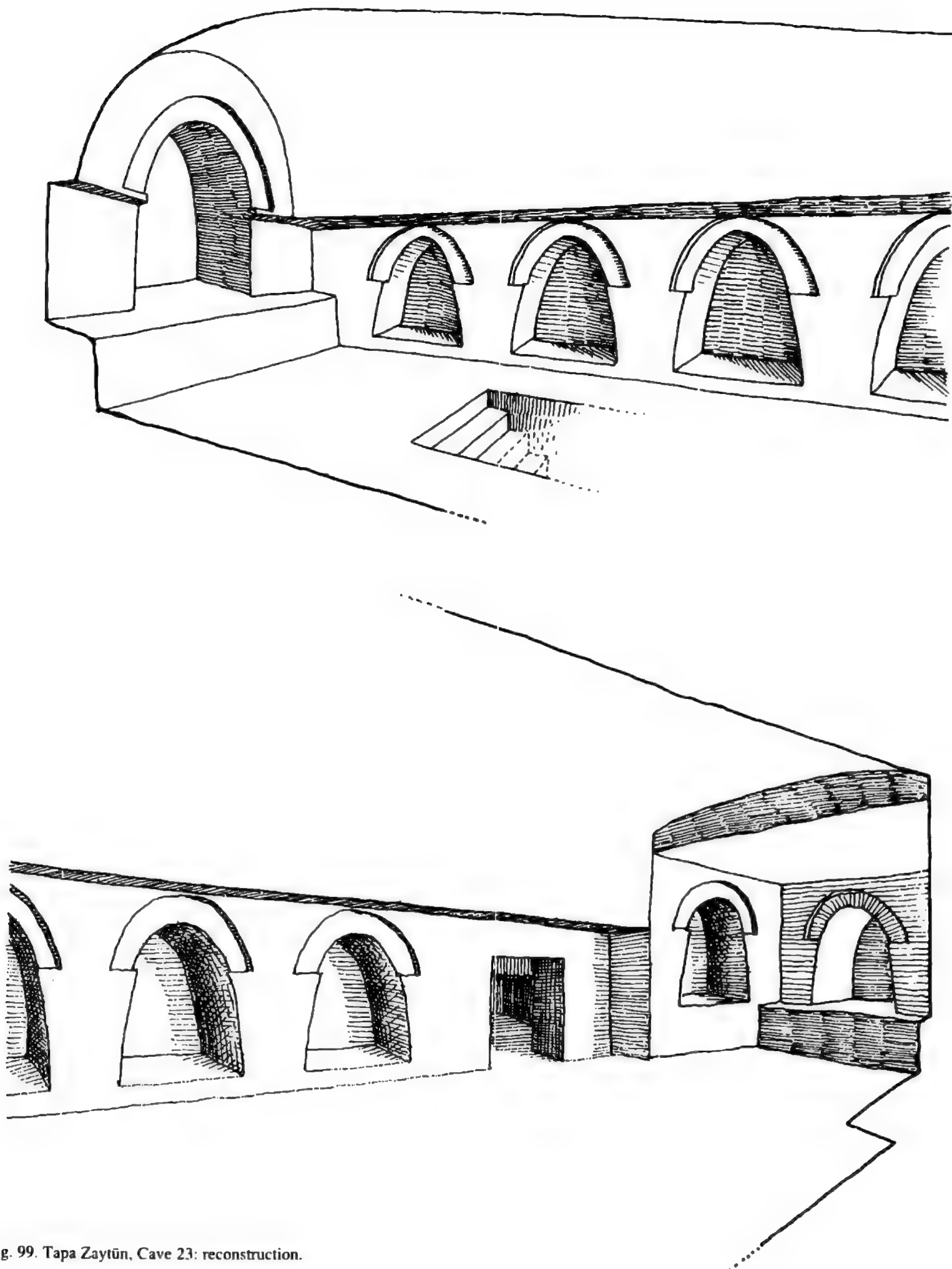


Fig. 99. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 23: reconstruction.

Cave 23a (Pl. XCV.b)

It is situated above *Cave 23*. It has a barrelled vault 3 m high, slightly flattened. A door in the back wall led to another room.

Fifth Terrace

This is the uppermost and smallest of all the terraces on the southern side of the group. Here open *Caves 24* and *25 (Pl. XCVIII.a)*.

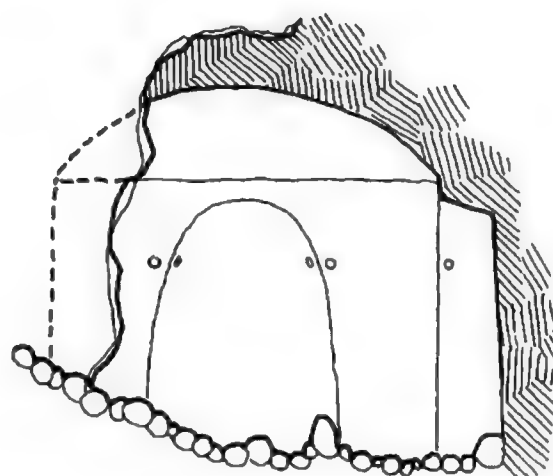
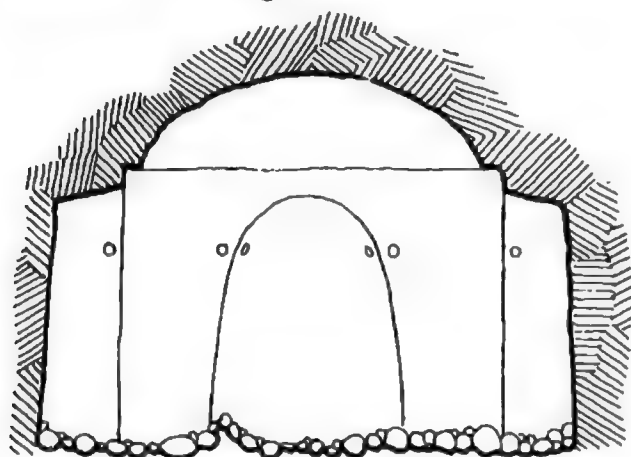
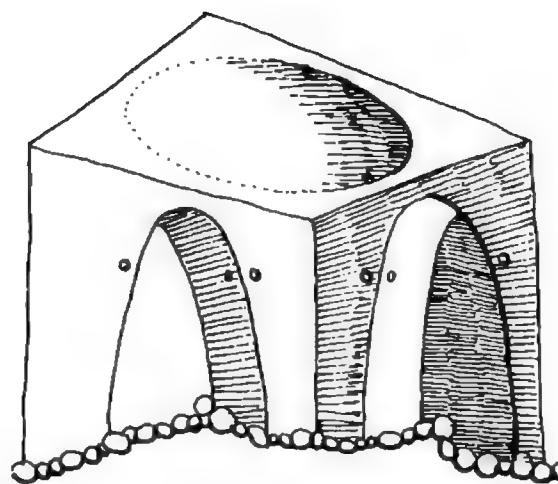
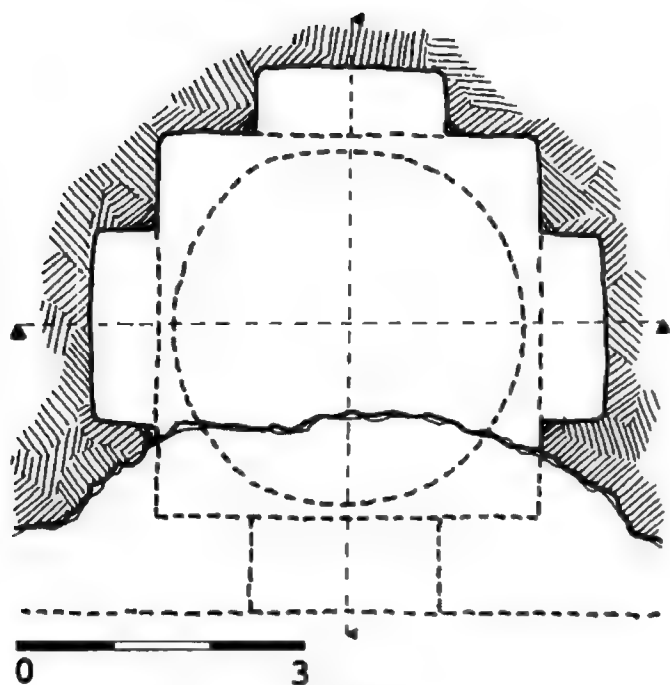


Fig. 100. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 24: plan, sections and axonometric view.

Cave 24 (Fig. 100; Pls. XCVIII.b-XCVIII.c)

This cave is square in plan, with sides measuring *c.* 3.5 m, and is covered by a lowered, corbelled dome. The cave is partly filled in, but the original height of the room can be calculated as *c.* 3 m. The eastern side, including a part of the dome, has almost entirely collapsed. Three large, parabolic-vaulted niches, reaching up to the level from which the dome starts, open on three sides.

This cave can be compared with Caves 585 and 627 at Bāmiyān (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pls. 136, 163; here Pl. CIV.b), where the domes rise on the square chambers without the help of squinches.

Cave 25 (Figs. 101-102; Pl. XCIX)

This cave is square in plan, with a flat ceiling; three large parabolic niches at a height of 0.5 m from the floor and 0.5 deep can be seen on the three side walls. It is likely that the bench along the back wall was either to be removed or reduced in size on completion of the work.

As pointed out above, the terracing operations executed on the slope of the hill that we have described were also made in the western part of the massif, where a number of caves were also excavated. We could not visit this part of Tapa Zaytūn, and only a few

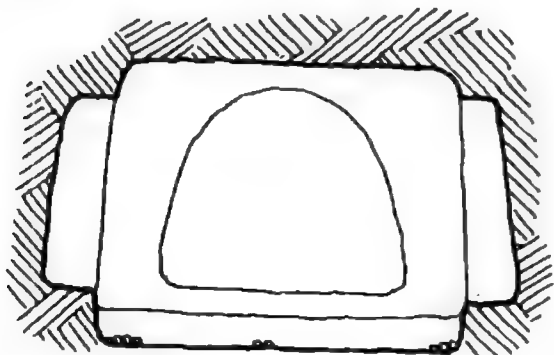
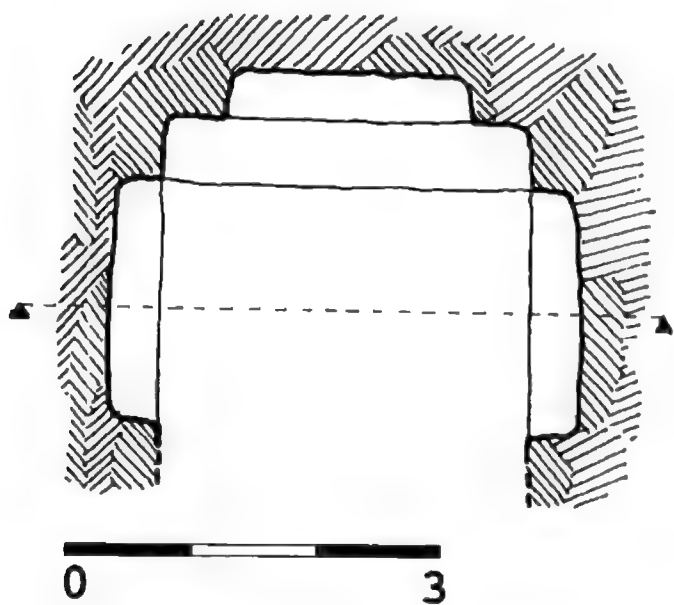


Fig. 101. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 25: plan and section.

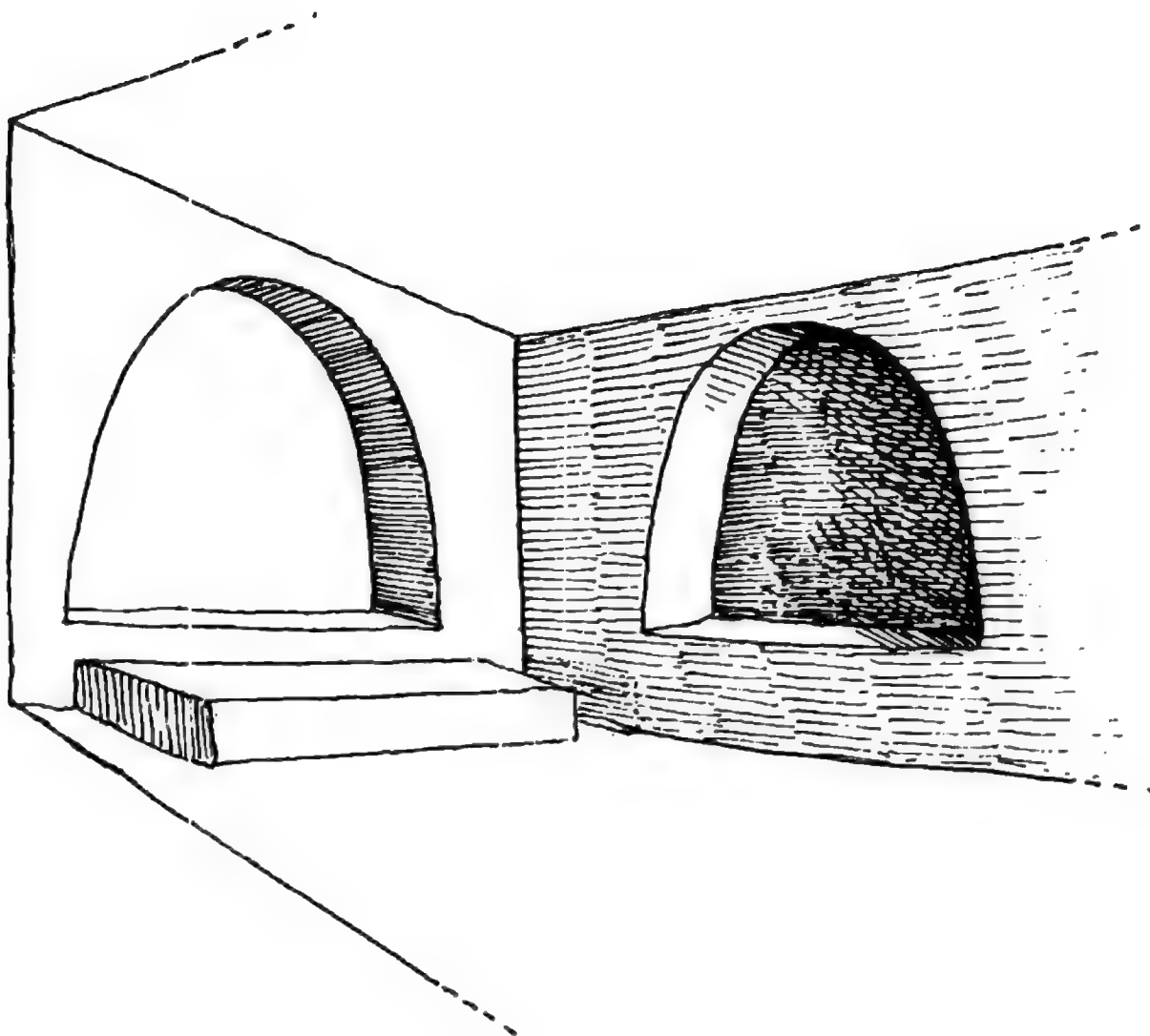


Fig. 102. Tapa Zaytūn, Cave 25: reconstruction.

photographs were taken. Large chapels open on the second and third terraces, and chapels and monk dwellings are recognizable at the upper level.

Excursus: Cave 2 at Haybāk

The unusual form of this cave has always raised questions (Foucher 1942-47, I: 128-29)⁽²⁴⁾. The monument (Fig. 103a) is composed of two long, parallel 'corridors' divided by a wall with thirteen openings putting them into communication. The corridor on the right has long 'benches' along the sidewalls, of which that on the left is well preserved. This corridor runs parallel to a terrace realized on the slope of the hill, with which it communicates through five doors, partly walled up.

The strange form of this cave may be explained as follows. Originally, a long, rectangular room (Fig. 103b) was excavated parallel to the artificial terrace realized on the hill slope, in the same way as Cave 23 at Tapa Zaytūn. The entrance was through a passage at one end of the building, and led to a vestibule. Thirteen niches were opened along the left sidewall, and the working bench left for excavating them was not removed. In fact, the opening of the row of niches along

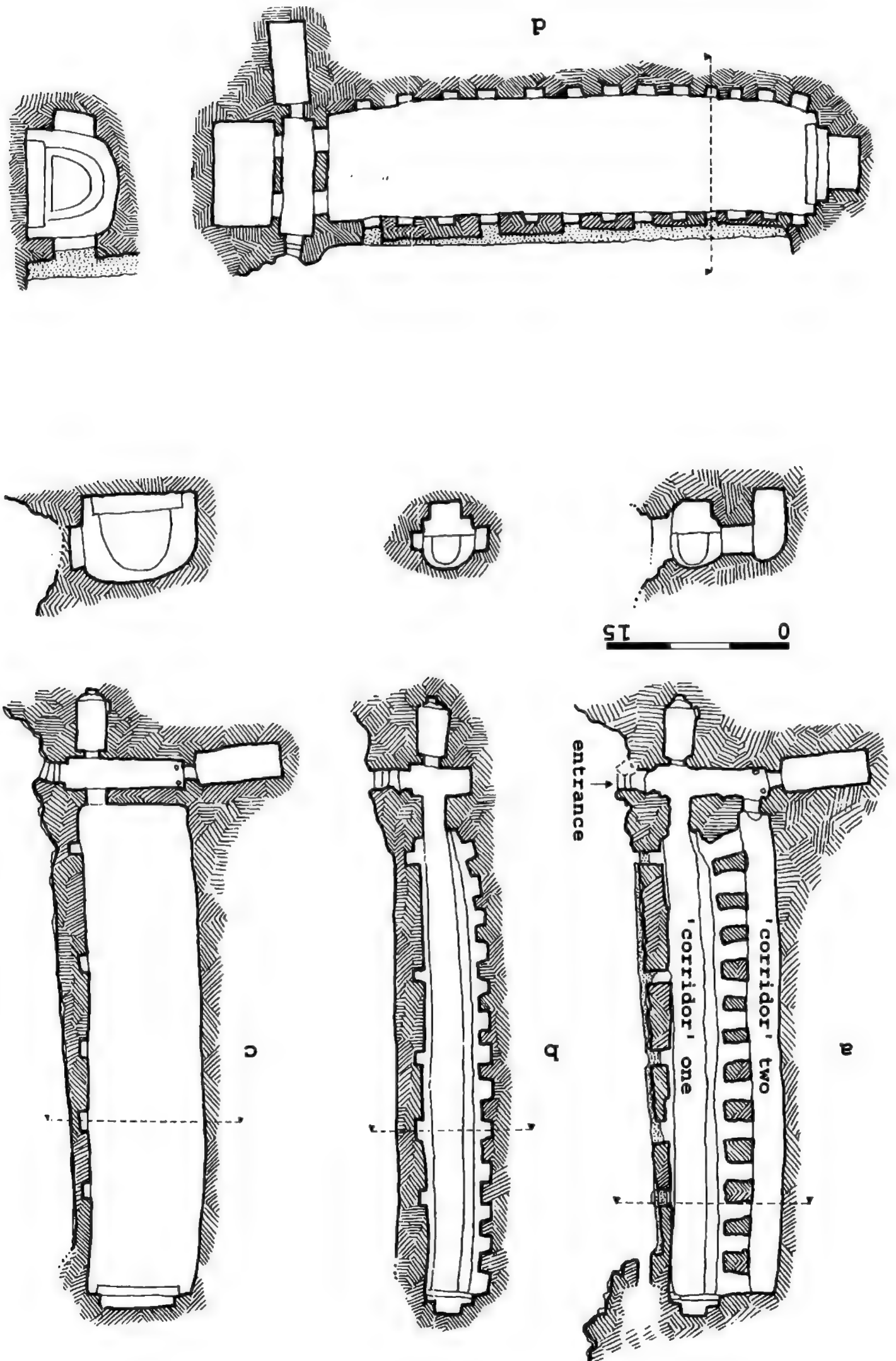
the right wall became problematic because of the failure of the rock on that side of the hill. A similar thing also happened in Cave 23 at Tapa Zaytūn, although in later times. From the photographs and drawings made by the Japanese Mission (Mizuno 1962: plan of cave in plan 4), it is possible that some attempts at reinforcing the right wall were made at this stage.

The final decision, however, was of excavating a larger cave changing position to the interior of the hill, where the rock was not weakened by the terracing operations. The second 'corridor' was thus executed, and the thirteen original niches were broken through as a first step for realizing the new layout of the cave. Fig. 103c shows an intermediate stage in the construction of the new building, and Fig. 103d shows what probably was the final project. The right sidewall along the terrace had to be further reinforced to allow the opening of the niches, and the entrance vestibule was further enlarged and rearranged.

The project was never completed, like the other gigantic monuments planned at the place.

⁽²⁴⁾ Foucher maintained that the cave served as monks' quarters, 'étranges que soient les arrangements intérieurs'.

Fig. 103. Haybak, Cave 2: *a*, plan and section; *b*, original plan of cave; *c*, enlargement of cave; *d*, new planned cave.



14. Shotor Ghār and Tōp-e Āhangarān

Only a few caves were hewn out in the small sandstone spur of Shotor Ghār (Pl. C.a, b). It was possible to visit and document one cave at ground level.

Cave 1, 1a (Figs. 104-105; Pl. CI)

Cave 1 is rectangular in shape, but its original length cannot be established since the front part has collapsed. It is 5.5 m wide and 3.5 m high, and its present length is 7.2 m. It has vertical side walls, flat ceiling and clean-cut corners. There is a low, unremoved bench along the back-side wall, at the centre of which there is a large, parabolic-vaulted niche with an unfinished dais. Two

small niches flank the central one on either side, high up in the wall. Two more niches face each other on the side walls, near the corners with the back wall. A door opens on the right-hand side, flanked by a small niche. It has two settings for a wooden lintel on top, and leads to a rectangular room (*Cave 1a*) with flat ceiling, 30-40 cm lower than the main cave.

Squared rectangular chapels of this kind are found at Bāmiyān, as for instance Caves 732, 741, 742, and 747 at the western end of the cliff (Higuchi 1983-84, II: pls. 170, 176, 179).

The two, unsurveyed caves at Tōp-e Āhangarān (Pl. CII) opening in the sandstone massif here seem to be the last along the river before crossing to Nāwor.

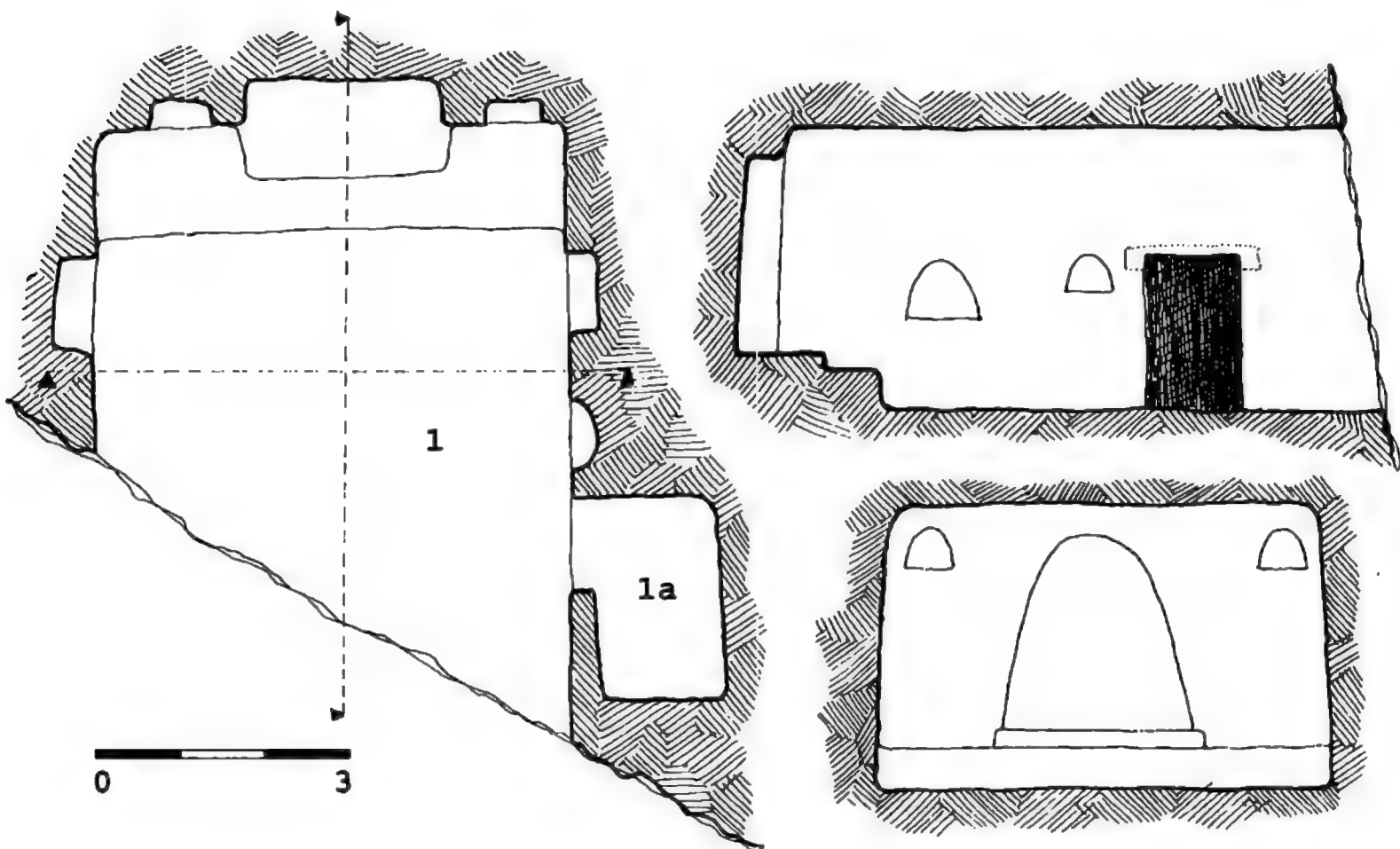


Fig. 104. Shotor Ghār, Caves 1-1a: plan and sections.

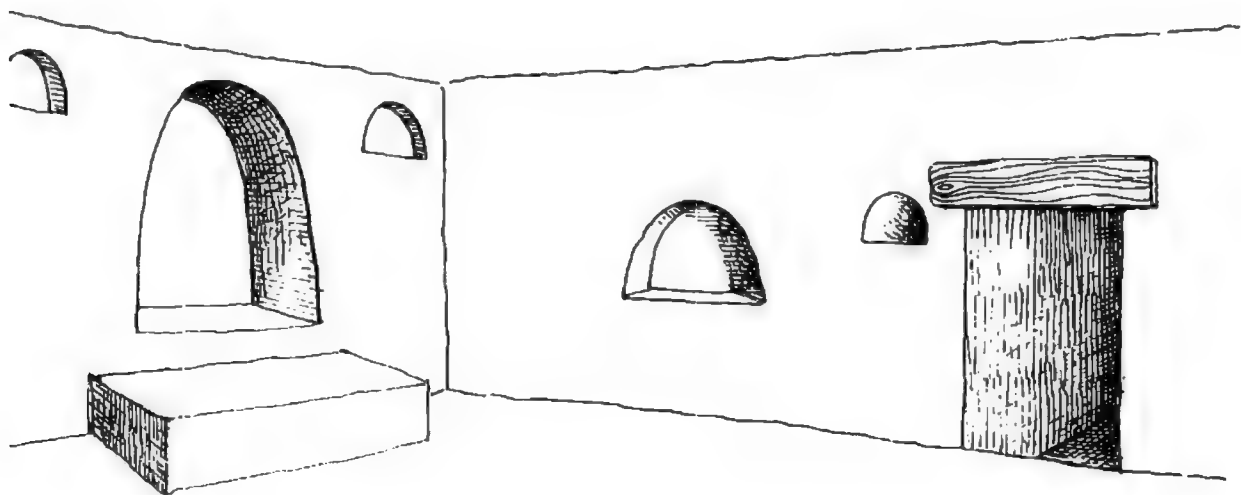


Fig. 105. Shotor Ghār, Cave 1: reconstruction.

3. THE HISTORICAL SETTING

To the West of Ghaznī: The Archaeological Data

In 1967, Umberto Scerrato discovered two Bactrian Greek rock-inscriptions in Jaghatū-Bargūl, 20 km northwest of Ghaznī (Fig. 2), which were attributed to the 5th-6th century (Scerrato 1967: 23). The first inscription, engraved on a boulder on the northeastern side of the Bād-e Asyā, a peak towering over the region (*ibid.*: 13), cites the Buddhist *triratna* formula (*ibid.*: 23; Humbach 1967: 25). The second, fragmentary inscription was engraved on a rock along the track leading to the Aftalā valley. Humbach (1967: 26) took ολογ (5th line) to be a borrowing from the Turkish *uluğ*, and considered the inscription as belonging 'to the Turkish period of Eastern Iranian history'. The inscription is of great interest for the history of the region, although the proposed date is too early, as has been noted (Mac Dowall & Taddei 1978: 243-44). Two small trial trenches at the base of the Bād-e Asyā yielded a few stamped potsherds (Scerrato 1967: 22, figs. 47a-49c) similar to those found in the late layers of Bagrām and Tapa Sardār, attributed by Kuwayama (2002: 170-71, 175-76, 191) to the 6th-7th century. Scerrato also retrieved two 'Napkī Malkā' coins (as they were called; Scerrato 1967: 22-23, figs. 44-45). We know that the much debated Nēzak coinage was produced south of the Hindukush in the 6th-7th century, and circulated for a long time in Zābulistān and Kābul. One of the mints was presumably located in Ghaznī (Alram 1996: 229; 1999-2000: 132).

A few years earlier, in 1962, Giuseppe Tucci had visited the Chakar valley, at a short distance from Ghaznī, where he found a *tapa* near the village of Haft Asyā called Shāh Mār, 'King of Snakes', which he suggested identifying with the abode of the god Zuna/Suna⁽²⁵⁾ (Tucci 1997: 140-41) — a deity on whose identification we will have something to say below. It is important to stress that Tucci, like many scholars before him and several others who were to follow, took for granted the identification of the Caojuzha kingdom visited by Xuanzang (Beal 1884, II: 282-85), tentatively restored as Jaukuṭā and further identified with the Jāguḍa mentioned in the *Mahābharata*; cf. below), with Jāghūrī. According to Tucci, the territory of Jāguḍa/Jāghūrī

started with the vast plateau just west of Ghaznī and reached the Arghandāb. As we will see in the following pages, the long-accepted Jāguḍa/Jāghūrī identification is, however, to be rejected.

In the same year (1962), A.D.H. Bivar visited Jāghūrī with the aim of finding a Greek inscription whose existence had been reported to Ahmad Ali Khozad, a well-known scholar of Afghan history and antiquarian studies. He discovered some petroglyphs and visited some of the Buddhist caves that we were to visit in the 1970s. Although Bivar did not think of documenting the caves (with the partial exception of the one at Tapa Sanawbar numbered Cave 2 in this Report), he was perfectly conscious of their importance, and rightly compared them to some of the caves at Bāmiyān and Haybāk (Bivar 1971). His dating of the Tapa Sanawbar cave (3rd-4th century A.D.; cf. above, p. 47) was consistent with the dating later proposed by Verardi (1981; below)⁽²⁶⁾. In 1974, Gérard Fussman published a trilingual inscription engraved on a large stone block on a mountain ridge barring the Dasht-e Nāwor to the west. It bears a date, 279, and the king's name, *Vhamakusasa*. According to Fussman (1974a: 38), the inscription was engraved at the beginning of Vima Kadphises's reign, but it is now clear that it is Vima Takto who is cited in the third line (Sims-Williams & Cribb 1995-96: 80, 86). The content of the inscription is unclear, but for the mention of the Iranian goddess Shao Nana (p. 39). Fussman argued that the third version (DN III) might be written in Kambojī (*ibid.*: 33-34), and that the Kambojas might once have inhabited the Jāghūrī region (once again identified with Jāguḍa) and the mountains around Ghaznī (*ibid.*: 33, n. 8). Exactly why a Kuṣāṇa rock inscription should have been engraved on a mountain in such a desolate region at 4320 m altitude (*ibid.*: 6) is not clear, and Fussman observed that only a king could have had any interest in having it engraved (*ibid.*: 39), although what interest it may have been remains unclear.

(²⁵) Or, rather, Zhuna (cf. below).

(²⁶) Bivar then proceeded to the *velāyat* of Ūrūzgān, where he had on a previous occasion found two inscriptions then considered 'Hephthalite' (Bivar 1954). On these cf. also Humbach (1966: 103-4).

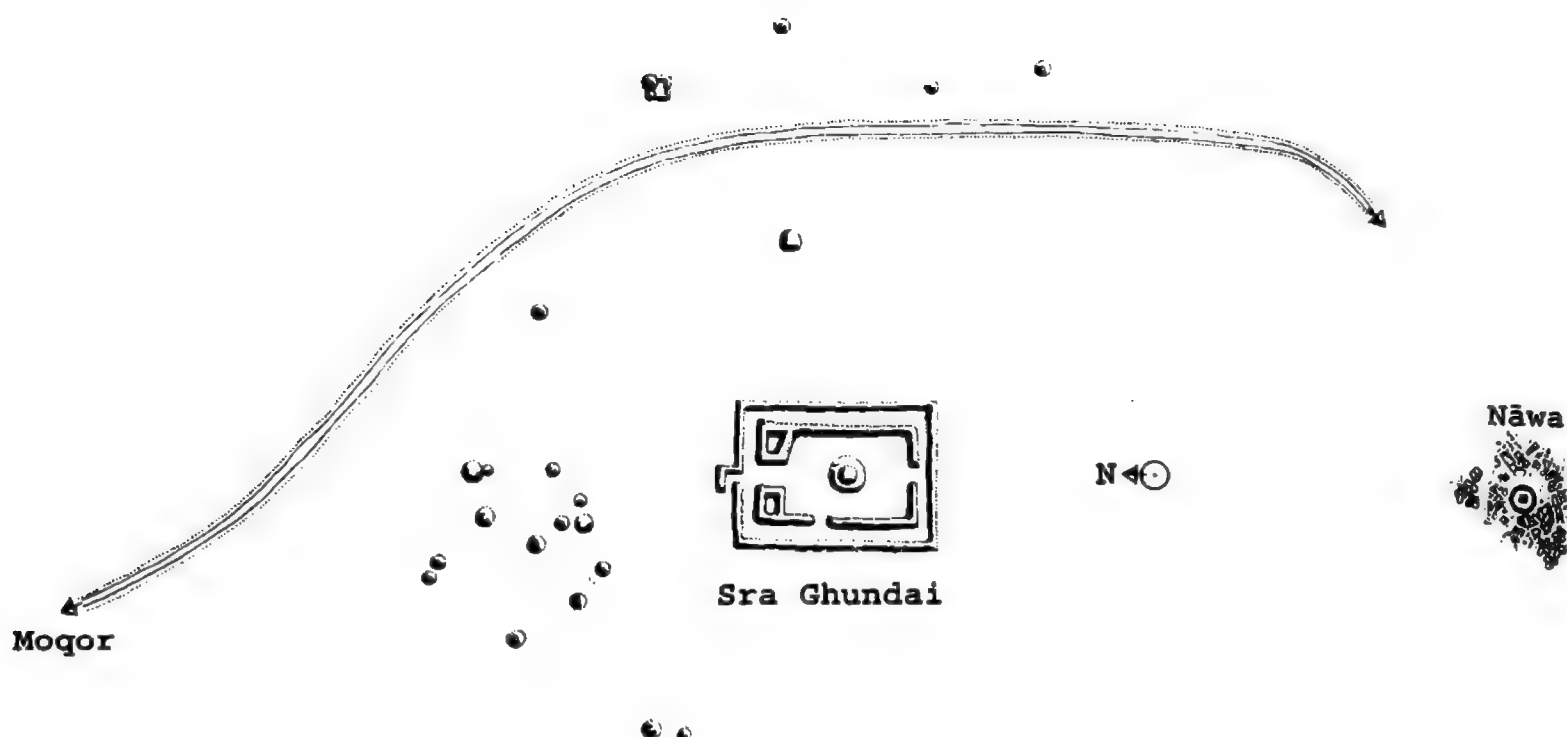


Fig. 106. Sra Ghundai in the Dasht-e Nāwa (sketch map).

In his comment on Fussman's edition of the texts, Bivar (1976) raised some doubts about the proposed Kuṣāṇa chronology but did not touch on the real question, or in other words the surprising fact that no other Kuṣāṇa records or monuments are known from the territory of Ghaznī, with the exception of coins. Only the earliest structures of the Buddhist sanctuary of Tapa Sardār near Ghaznī may turn out to belong to the time of the Kuṣāṇas (below). Clearly, Bivar wrote in a period when the existence of Kuṣāṇa or late Kuṣāṇa monuments south of the Hindukush was accepted as a matter of fact. Actually, the nearest place bearing evidence of the Kuṣāṇa presence is the Wardak valley, where Charles Masson in the 19th century retrieved an inscribed reliquary dated year 51 (Konow 1929: 165-70; Fussman 1974b: 88, n. 3).

Fussman also drew attention to the existence of a ruined fortress to the north of the Dasht-e Nāwor, at the junction of two rivers forming the Khawāt, a tributary of the Wardak. He dated the fortress — built in unbaked bricks, with a central tower — to the 4th century A.D. or later (Fussman 1947b: 52). The documentation now available on the pre-Muslim monuments of Central Hindukush (Le Berre 1987) could provide better evidence as to its typology and date, which must probably be brought down to the 6th-7th century. Fussman also noticed the abandoned, rock-cave dwellings of Shāhr-e Khawāt, situated between the Dasht-e Nāwor and the upper Khawāt valley. The modern village

est en effet bâti au-dessus d'une série d'habitations troglodytes, creusées de main d'homme, non pas à flanc de falaise, mais sous la roche tendre d'un petit plateau. Ces grottes artificielles n'ont rien de remarquable. Les volumes sont irréguliers et il n'y a aucune trace de décor, peint ou sculpté. (*Ibid.*: 51).

In 1975, G. Verardi published a small, reworked sandstone pilaster (originally a door-post) showing a relief in Gandharan style on one side, found by chance at Qarabāgh-e Ghaznī. He tentatively dated it to the 3rd century A.D., and its phase of reuse to the 4th-5th century (Verardi 1975: 290) on the basis of the then accepted chronology of Tapa Sardār's main *stūpa*.

In the early 1970s, the Italian Archaeological Mission purchased a few miniature clay *stūpas* from Moqor of the same kind as those which had been found a few years earlier at Gūdul-e Āhangarān near Ghaznī, which M. Taddei had published and dated to the 7th-8th century (Taddei 1970: 77)⁽²⁷⁾. In the Moqor-Qarabāgh area, there are, actually, several mounds, none of which has seen even the hastiest of surveys. Some were first noticed by Charles Masson, who saw a *tapa*, apparently not Buddhist, near the village of Sar Chishma [Sir Chishma], 'fountain-head', near the spring of the Tarnak river, and a few more *tapas* along the road to Ōbo⁽²⁸⁾ and

⁽²⁷⁾ These objects were kept in the storehouse of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Ghaznī and had separate inventory numbers.

⁽²⁸⁾ This is, actually, the Pashto name for 'water'.

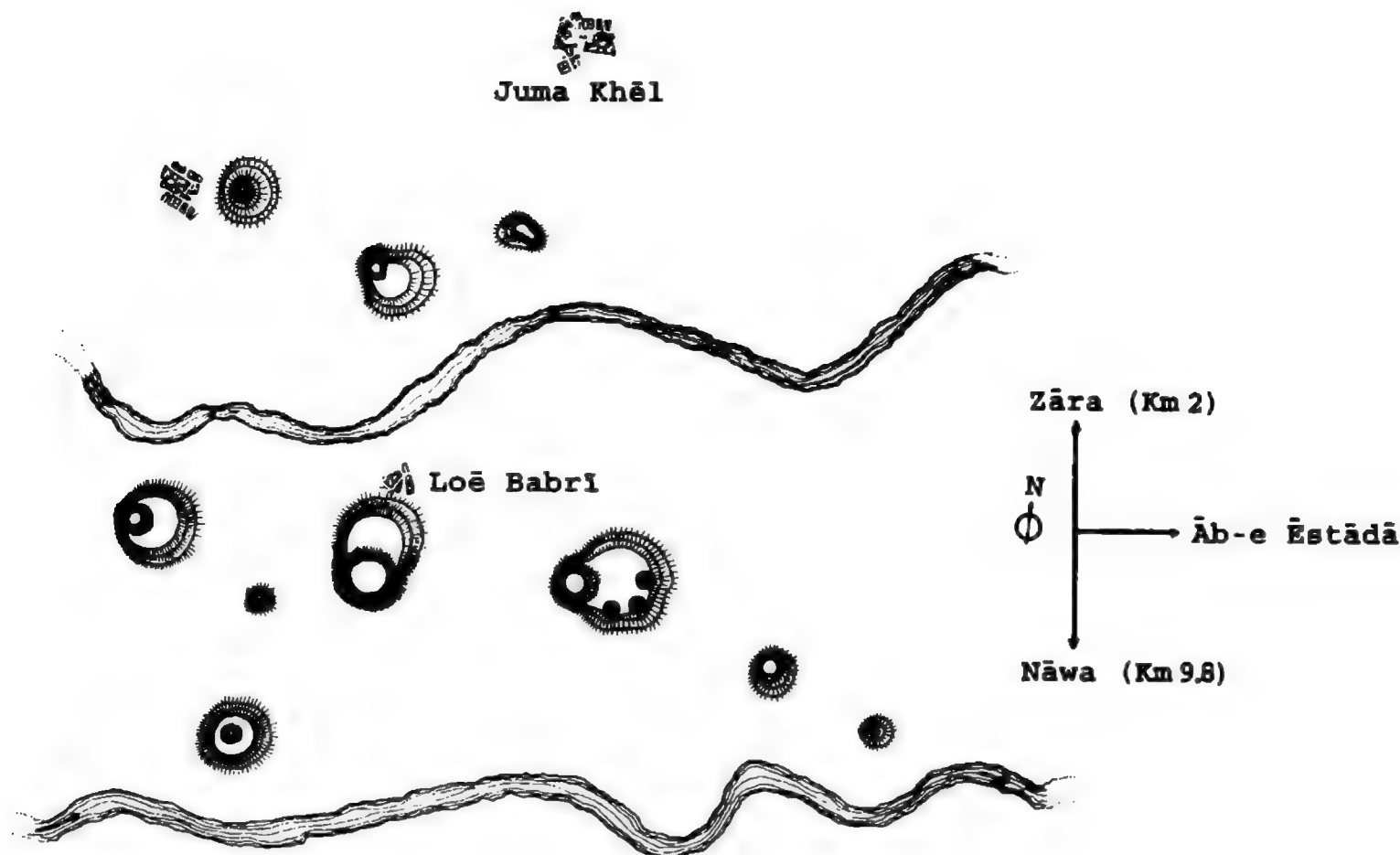


Fig. 107. Mounds along the ancient northeast shoreline of the Āb-e Ēstādā (sketch map).

near this locality (Masson 1842, II: 216-17). Masson mentions one more large mound to the left of the road after leaving Qarabāgh (*ibid.*: 218). Two *tapas* rise there in the neighbourhood of the Ziyarāt-e Sayyed Sultān Shāh Āghā, and a large mound, Mīr Zāka, surrounded by a few minor mounds, is situated by the roadside between Qarabāgh and Moqor. Other *tapas* are found in the *vālesvāli* of Āb Band (mound of Tawdā Karīz, to the left of the Qarabāgh-Moqor road) and near the village of Jangalāk, in the locality of Shāhr-e Gombad, and indeed to the north and northwest of Moqor (at Angurī, in the Rasāna locality, and at Dehmarda). The Moqor-Qarabāgh area, which ultimately allows access to Ghaznī and Kābul from Panjāb, is of great importance, and thorough exploration there would provide vital information on the history of Zābulistān.

Of great interest is also the adjoining region of Āb-e Ēstādā (Fig. 1), which was visited in 1976 by the same members of the Italian mission who then proceeded to the Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī districts. To the north of Nāwa, the district capital, several minor mounds of the village farm type are grouped around Sra Ghundai, a large, rectangular mound with double walls and a round structure in the centre (Fig. 106). Sra Ghundai is a real town, showing both pre-Muslim and Islamic evidence. A series of small *tapas* similar to those surrounding Sra Ghundai, and yielding, like them, pre-Muslim pottery, are regularly spaced along the original northeast shoreline of the Āb-e Ēstādā lake, as far as Dīla (Scerrato & Verardi 1976; Taddei & Verardi 1985a: 291-93; see

here Fig. 107). As already noted, Āb-e Ēstādā receives the waters of the Ghaznī river, and one can proceed from there towards the Zhōb valley and, farther on, to Panjāb⁽²⁹⁾.

This is more or less all we know of the territories to the west of Ghaznī, not considering the Buddhist caves which are the object of this report.

Apart from these areas, we owe our knowledge of the region to Ghaznī itself. The Buddhist sanctuary of Tapa Sardār deserves special attention. It is of course already very well known⁽³⁰⁾, and we shall limit our observations here to noting that, whereas the final phase of its construction has always been attributed to the 8th century, the chronology of the early monastery has been the object of some debate. Taddei was initially inclined to attribute the clay images in the Gandharan tradition from Early Phase II to c. the 2nd century A.D., and the

⁽²⁹⁾ For the sake of completeness, we may also recall the site of Sheher Kūrhān [*sic*] in the district of Ajrestān, to the west of the lake of Nāwor (Fig. 1). It was mentioned by Masson (1842, II: 223-24), who believed (without visiting it) that it was the site of a city: 'numerous relics, coins, &c, are found there; but this only proves that it is an ancient place of sepulture'. The existence there of 'a conspicuous tumulus known as *Shah Kurgan*, "the Royal Tumulus"', was also reported by Bivar (1954: 118), who did not give any other details.

⁽³⁰⁾ The reader is referred to Taddei 1969, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1986, 1999; Taddei & Silvi Antonini 1981; Taddei & Verardi 1978, 1981, 1984, 1985a, 1985b; Verardi 1983, 1984; Kuwayama 2002: 181-84, 190-93.

existence of a still unpublished *brāhmī* inscription on a vessel reading *kanekkya mahārāja vihāra* is to be mentioned in this regard (Taddei, unpubl.). Clearly, even supposing that reference here is to Kaniška I and not one of his successors⁽¹⁾, the original sanctuary may have been attributed to the Kuṣāṇa emperor for reasons of prestige, and not actually built by him. Kuwayama (2002: esp. 190-93) has maintained that the sanctuary of Early Phase II cannot be earlier than the second half of the 6th century, although he has for obvious reasons been unable to propose any date for Early Phase I, which is documented by very few structures and no iconographic or inscriptional material. Taddei, who had always stressed the presence of definitely later material among the 'Gandharan' fragments (Taddei 1972: 554), was sensitive to Kuwayama's criticism, but suggested a 4th-5th, or a 4th-6th century date for Early Phase II, attributing the monuments of Early Phase I to the 3rd century (Taddei 1986; 1993: 120). The numismatic evidence depicts a complex picture. The series begins with one coin each of Soter Megas and Vima Kadphises. Subsequent Kuṣāṇa kings are well represented — Kaniška with eight coppers in three denominations, Huviška with nine copper tetradrachms of the heavy weight standard, four of the reduced weight tetradrachms and two imitation copper drachms, Vāsudeva with eight broad flan coppers. There are forty later Kuṣāṇa coppers of three series — the dumpy fabric type of Śiva and the bull, the Ardoxsho series, and the later cruder Śiva series that follows. Under the Kuṣāṇas and their successors the later Kuṣāṇas, Ghaznī used their copper coinage as did Haḍḍa, Bagrām, Butkara and Taxila. Its currency is quite distinct from that at Qandahār (consisting of coins of the later Indo-Parthians, followed by the distinctive large Sasanian imperial coppers of Ardashīr and Shāpūr), but at the time of Shāpūr II's eastern campaign c. A.D. 360, the coinage of Ghaznī diverges from that at Bagrām, Butkara and Taxila: there seems to have been no place for the Kushano-Sasanian dumpy altar copper that were so numerous at Bagrām and Taxila⁽²⁾.

Only further excavations aiming at investigating the complex stratigraphy of Early Period II and fixing the chronology of Early Period I could cast some light on the relation between the original sanctuary, the *Kanekkya* of the inscription and the numismatic evidence.

Mention should also be made of the existence of two other *stūpas* in Ghaznī, that of Kōh-e Pahlavān, not far from Tapa Sardār, and the *stūpa* once situated in Ghaznī at the start of the caravan track leading to Jaghatū, destroyed long since (Scerrato 1967: 23). Of the votive *stūpas* from Gūdul-e Āhangarān we have already said above.

As regards the town proper, its existence in pre-Muslim times is certain although, according to Bombaci (1959: 18), we cannot tell whether it occupied the area of the present-day town. The latter shows two stages of construction, an earlier one in baked bricks probably belonging to the age of the Timurids and a recent one built in unbaked bricks (*ibid.*). However, in the days of

Sabuktigīn, Ghaznī is said to have been composed of a citadel and a *madina* protected by a wall with four gates (Rehman 1979: 9, on the authority of Maqdisī) — a description which, on the whole, fits the present-day situation⁽³⁾. An earlier town can be made out in the huge quadrangular enclosure (about 800 × 600 m) south of the minaret of Mas'ūd III. An aerial photograph taken in 1946 (Pl. CIII) shows it with the appearance of a *castrum*, crossed by orthogonal streets, where the plan of the ancient buildings is clearly visible (Scerrato 1959: 30-31). No work has ever been carried out there, however.

Ghaznī is thought to have been the place where the earliest mint issuing the Nēzak coinage in the 6th century was active (Göbl 1967, II: 70; Alram 1996: 529; 1999-2000: 132), and indeed the place of origin of the mixed Alxon-Nēzak coins (Alram 1996: 532; 1999-2000: 134). This is one of the most debated questions in the numismatic field, and we will touch upon the matter below.

Four sherds with stamped medallions from large jars presented to the Italian Mission in the 1970s help fill out the picture. SP 185 and 187 show a monogram of Sasanian type and a legend in squared characters either in Pahlavi or in calligraphic Bactrian of the kind attested in Loulan; SP 186 and 188 bear a *tamga* encircled by a legend in cursive Bactrian rounded characters. Both medallions may be tentatively dated to about the 5th century⁽⁴⁾.

Caøjuzha/Zābulistān and Jāghūrī

Seeking to retrace the road followed by Xuanzang on his way back to China, Alfred Foucher maintained that the pilgrim, accompanied by the King of Kāpiśī, may well have arrived via Qalāt-e Ghilzai, 'au pays de Ts'ao-kiu-tch'a, c'est-à-dire le Jāguḍa' — an identification established by Watters (1904-5, II: 266) and authoritatively confirmed by Marquart and De Groot (1915: 281-82) — and that

grâce à une chance extraordinaire, ce pays figure toujours sur nos cartes sous le nom à peine défiguré de Jaghuri. C'est aujourd'hui la haute vallée de l'Arghand-āb. (Foucher 1942-47, II: 231).

From there the pilgrim would have proceeded northwards to the country of Fulishisatangna via the Dasht-e Nāwor, the Bōkān pass and the Khawāt valley.

(¹) Riccardo Garbini, who is presently studying the inscription, maintains that it cannot be earlier than the 5th century, and probably datable to the 6th-7th century. This date fits with the chronology of Tapa Sardār's Early Phase II suggested by Kuwayama (below).

(²) We thank Dr David W. MacDowall, who is currently preparing the publication of the coins from Tapa Sardār, for giving us this preliminary information.

(³) The town gates number three today, the Darvāza-ye Mirā, the Darvāza-ye Bāzār and the Darvāza-ye Kanak.

(⁴) R. Garbini is at present studying this and other inscribed material from Ghaznī.

and farther on to Kāpiśī after passing from the valley of Khawāt to the Kābul river valley (*ibid.*: 232). Foucher further accepted the restoration of Fulishisatangna as Vrijisthāna proposed by Julien (1853, III: 416), despite the fact that Watters (1904-5, II: 267-68) had rejected it, and suggested it be identified as Garjistān⁽³⁵⁾. Actually, Foucher had some reservations about his own conjectures, because neither Jāguḍa/Jāghūrī nor Vrijisthāna/Garjistān had ever been explored, and because

on n'a pas reculé devant l'idée de rapprocher également les transcriptions chinoises de Ts'ao-ki-tch'a [Caojuzha] ou Ts'ao-li [Caoli] du Jābul ou Zābul des géographes arabes: et de fait, c'est toujours de la même région qu'il s'agit. (Foucher 1942-47: 235).

Doubts about Foucher's reconstruction were actually raised by Bombaci, who did not believe in the identity Ts'ao-chu-t'a-Jāguḍa-Jāghūrī, nor in the hypothesis that the normal route from Qandahār to Kābul passed through the upper Arghandāb valley instead of continuing as far as Ghaznī and beyond (Bombaci 1957: 254)⁽³⁶⁾. Bombaci would have been perfectly right but for the fact that he doubted the existence of *any* route via the upper Arghandāb. The presence of the Buddhist monasteries there leaves little doubt that a passage did exist leading to the lake of Nāwor and the regions beyond.

To S. Kuwayama and his Kyoto University équipe goes the merit of clarifying the Caojuzha/Jāguḍa question. In a series of articles and comments on translations from the Chinese, Kuwayama went through the Chinese sources in order to establish the real identity of the regions of eastern Afghanistan in the course of time. Here we follow, in particular, the comment he and his team offered on the Japanese translation of Huichao's travelogue (Kuwayama 1998), not only for the evidence it contains, but also because it is probably little known to western scholars.

Caojuzha (<*dzāukiūtâ), found in Xuanzang's *Da Tang xiyu ji*, is indeed one of the names used in Chinese from the 7th century onwards to indicate the region known to the Arabic sources as Zābulistān. Other names were Caoju (<*dzāu-kiu), used by Xuanzang and in the *Xin Tang shu*, Caoli (<*dzāu-li), also used by Xuanzang, Zaoli (<*dzāu-li), found in the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan*, Xieyu (<*zia-jiwæt) and Xieyue (<*zia-jiwæt), attested from the time of Wu Zetian (690-705) and used, respectively, by Huichao and in the *Xin Tang shu* and by Xuanying in the *Yiqiejing yinyi*. We also find Duhuluosatana (<*zia-yo-lâ-sât-t'â-nâ) in Huichao, Chewuchasuotana (<*zia-o-dâ-sâ-t'â-nâ) in Xuanying, and, lastly, the forms Hedaluozhi (<*χâ-dât-lâ-tsiē) in the *Xin Tang shu*, and Gedaluozhi (<*kât-dât-lâ-tsiē) in the *Jiu Tang shu* and the *Xin Tang shu* (cf. Kuwayama 1998: 135).

The reconstruction of Caojuzha as Jaukuṭā, a supposed transcription of *jāguḍa* (saffron, or the land of saffron; cf. Watters 1905-6, II: 266; Marquart & De Groot 1915: 281-82), has been generally accepted, as seen above, although it is not clear why Xuanzang,

usually inclined to adopt the correct Sanskrit forms, should not have done so in this case, and should have used a character of the cong (dz-) class to transliterate Sanskrit *j* instead of a character of the zhan (z-) class as usual (Kuwayama 1998: 136). Xuanzang did not transliterate the original pronunciation of the names of the regions which he thought belonged to India or pertained, in any case, to the Buddhist cultural area, but sanskritized it (*ibid.*: 137). The form Caojuzha is not a Sanskrit form, and we are unable to reconstruct the original pronunciation of the name. Dz(au) (= cao) cannot transliterate a normal Sanskrit consonant, and the phoneme is likely to have been part of the original word heard by the pilgrim. Thus Caojuzha/Caojuzhai may be a Sanskritization of the original name of the region. If a velar sound is behind zhai, we could restore it as *dzaul. The choice of *li* in Cao(zao)li (a variant seen above) could be an attempt to transliterate a similar sound at the end of the word (*ibid.*: 138).

As regards the forms Xieyu and Xieyue, they may both be considered as representing zaul or zawul (either a change from dz->z-, or an attempt to transliterate dzaul/dzaul) (*ibid.*).

Chewuchasuotana is restored as *jauḍasthāna, where *jauḍa- can be considered as a Sanskritized form of an original similar to (d)zaul or (d)zauḷ. As for jāguḍa- (whose long ā raises some questions), it may have been a Sanskritized form of the same toponym, the reason why neither Xuanzang nor Huichao used this term probably depending on the fact that it had never been adopted in Buddhist Sanskrit, and was therefore unknown to them (*ibid.*: 138-39). It may be recalled that the name jāguḍa- is attested in the *Mahābhārata* (III, 51, 1991; cf. Lévi 1915: 84).

At first sight the term Duhuluosatana seems much like Chewuchasuotana, but the phoneme hu (yo) is rarely used to transliterate Sanskrit, since the Sanskrit *h* was rendered with characters of the xiao (x-) class. It might transliterate a name like *jāhulasthāna, but Huichao

(³⁵) This name is usually used to indicate the upper eastern valley of the Murghāb (cf. Minorsky 1940: map on p. 329); however, as noted by Sims-Williams (1996: 645), Garjistān should rather mean 'the country of the mountaineers', thus indicating the mountain regions south of Tokhāristān as a whole. Cf. also Foucher (1947, II: 232).

(³⁶) Bombaci (1957: 248) shows that the two valleys of the Tamak and of the Ghaznī River provided the best-suited route for travelling from Sistān to the plains south of the Hindukush and farther on to Kābul. After leaving Ghaznī, the route entered the valley of Lōgar, whose importance 'lay in its being strategically placed to control the main entrance to the Kābul valley from the side of Zābulistān' (Rehman 1979: 12). What we do not know, is whether the main route turned towards Lōgar just before reaching present-day Shaikhābād, or entered Lōgar from near Ghaznī via Zana Khān and the plateau of Kharwār (where the large Buddhist site of Qafir Kōt has been recently discovered). From Kharwār, the road proceeded either to Charkh (a difficult itinerary) or to Altamūr and further northwest approximately following the modern Gardīz-Pol-e 'Alam road. The middle Lōgar valley is relatively known, but no archaeological survey has ever been made in the area lying between the Shaykhābād-Pol-e 'Alam and the Ghaznī-Gardīz axes.

expressly states that it was a place name popular with the inhabitants of the region, and may actually render a pronunciation like *śah(u)rasthāna*, a possible Sanskritization of Persian *šahristān*. The latter would have been the name by which the local population called their capital town, and Huichao would have used the term as a common name.

Another hypothesis is that Duhuluo, if the insonorization of the sounds rendered by the jia and chan classes is not recognized, transliterates Jāghūrī as a pseudo-Sanskrit form based on this toponym (Kuwayama 1998: 139).

The last two names for Zābul/Zābulistān found in the Chinese sources of the period are Hedaluozhi and Gedaluozhi, for which cf. below.

Contrary to what has long been believed, there is probably no literary reference to ancient Jāghūrī. The Chinese sources are silent on it (but for the hypothesis seen above), nor do the early Islamic sources offer any information. Even later sources such as the *Bābur Nāma*, which gives a very detailed account of Afghanistan, does not mention Jāghūrī. The only site mentioned in the Islamic sources is Nāy Qal'a (above, and Appendix).

Since Caojuzha/Jaukuṭā most probably corresponds to Zābulistān, the information supplied by Xuanzang should be referred to the kingdom of Zābul as a whole, and not simply to the upper Arghandāb region. The 'some ten *stūpas* built by Aśoka-rāja', the 'several hundred *saṅghārāmas*, with 1000 or so priests', and the 'several tens of Deva temples' (Beal 1884, II: 284), among which that of Zhuna was the most popular, are to be sought throughout the whole Zābul territory, and not in the restricted region of Jāghūrī. It is true that the Jāghūrī territory is archaeologically very promising, but not for the reasons suggested by Foucher; nor can we follow Tucci in seeking to locate the mountain of the god Zhuna in the vicinity of Ghaznī.

The borders of Zābulistān are rather difficult to determine. Zābulistān broadly corresponds to the territory of Ghaznī, which was the summer residence of the king (cf. Bombaci 1959: 4). According to Ghirshman (1948: 104), the hearth of the country was the Ghaznī-Āb-e Ēstāda region; its northern borders were as far as Kābul to the north and the Solaymān mountains to the east; it reached the Helmand basin to the west, as far as Qalāt, and possibly beyond. According to Petech (1988: 189), it included the Ghaznī region and present-day Hazarajāt, and should correspond, at least partly, to the Paropamisadae of the classical sources (Benveniste 1935: 143; Daffinà 1967: 104). The Bactrian inscription from Tang-e Safedak confirms this opinion: there is little doubt that at least in the first half of the 8th century the northern border of the kingdom included parts of central Hindukush, west of Bāmiyān (Lee & Sims-Williams 2003: 166). Its extension southwards is unclear. We know from the Arab and Persian sources, some of which will be quoted below, that its rulers were repeatedly attacked by the Arabs between the seventh and the ninth century as far south as Bost and al-Rukhaj, which should

therefore be included within the boundaries of the kingdom; al-Rukhaj corresponds to the region of Qandahār, i.e. to ancient Arachosia (cf. Rehman 1979: 5; Petech 1988: 189). Scarcia (1965: 133) maintains that al-Rukhaj must have corresponded to the whole region south of the Bost-Zābul line.

The principal towns of the kingdom, according to the Tang sources (we follow Kuwayama 1987: 259) were the unidentified Fubaosedian, which appears as having been the capital in the *Monograph on Geography* of the *Xing Tang Shu* (Vol. 43b), Hexina (Ghaznī) and Hesaluo (restored as Ghasala) by Mizutani, which were the two capital towns according to Xuanzang (cf. Beal 1884, II: 283). The *Monograph on Geography* reports that the *dudufu* or Governorate General⁽³⁷⁾ of Tiaozhi (a generic term indicating the far West) had its headquarters in Fubaosedian, and as regards Hesaluo, which is also unidentified⁽³⁸⁾, it would correspond to the Haosa Dacheng in the Xihai prefecture (*zhou*) of the Governorate mentioned in the *Xin Tang Shu* (Vol. 221b). Other towns in the kingdom, according to the *Monograph on Geography*, were Huwen-cheng, Zanhousedian-cheng, Wulinan-cheng and Asuoer. The latter was another capital town where the king used to reside. It is Asuoer, according to Kuwayama (1987: 259), that should be restored as (Gh)asal(a). On the basis of the later history of the territory of Ghaznī, it may be identified with Lashkar Gāhr⁽³⁹⁾.

(³⁷) For *dudufu*, and *duhufu* (below), we follow the translation proposed by des Rotours (1974: 668, 703 ff.).

(³⁸) Cunningham (1871: 33-34) identified Hesaluo with Gozar on the Helmand river, but nothing positive can be said on this regard. Hesaluo is described by Xuanzang as having 'a fountain, of which the water divides itself into many branches, and which the people utilise for the purposes of irrigation. The climate is cold; there are frequent hail and snow storms [...]' (Beal 1884, II: 283-84). This description fits well with Qafir Kōt in Kharwār, 2500 m high; there is a spring at the centre of the amphitheatre constituted by the mounds formed by monasteries and *stūpas* to the west of the town proper. The river Charkh flows to the south of the settlement, making cultivation possible, and a river branch flows to the south of the sacred area. The rank of *dacheng*, great town or capital, attributed to Haosa (which, according to Kuwayama, corresponds to Hesaluo), would perfectly fit Qafir Kōt.

(³⁹) These are the two relevant passages from the *Xing Tang Shu*, kindly translated for me by Minoru Inaba: 1) (Vol. 221b) 'Xieyu lies to the southwest of Tokhāra. Originally it had been called Caojuzha or Caoju. It was called Hedaluozhi in the Xianqing era, and in the reign of Zetian-Wuhou the present name was applied. The distances from Xieyu, east to Jibin and north to Fanyan [Bāmiyān], are 400 *li*, respectively. To the south of it lies Poluomen [India], to the west lies Bosi [Persia], and to the north lies Hushijian [Gozgān]. The king resides in the capital Hesaluo. The kingdom is 7000 *li* wide. The king also lives in another capital, Asuoer'; 2) (Vol. 43b) 'Tiaozhi *dudufu* is placed in Fubaosedian-cheng, Hedaluozhi kingdom. There are nine prefectures under it. The Xiliu prefecture is placed at Huwen-cheng. The Yuquan prefecture is placed in Zanhousedian-cheng. The Lichi prefecture is placed in Juse village [*buluo*: settlement/tribe?]. The Yanzi prefecture is placed in Ehu village. The Juqiao prefecture is placed in Wulinan-cheng. The Qian prefecture is placed in Qianlan village. Xihai prefecture is placed in the capital city Haosa (? Haosa Dacheng). The Zhenxi prefecture is placed in Huohen village. The Qiantuo prefecture is placed in Fulang village'.

After his account of the kingdom of Zābul, Xuanzang gives a brief description of Fulishisatangna, located between Zābul to the south and Kāpiśī to the east. It is clear from the *Life* that the way leading out of this kingdom ran eastwards, emerging 'on the frontiers of Kapiśa' (Beal 1911: 193). In length, Fulishisatangna measured 2000 *li*, thus equalling in length the kingdom of Bāmiyān (Beal 1884, II: 285-86; for Bāmiyān, cf. *ibid.*, I: 49). We have already recalled the unlikely restoration of Fulishisatangna as Vrijisthāna. We may also recall the tentative restitution, proposed by Cunningham (1871: 29-30), as Urdhasthāna, 'high place', further identified with Ortospāna of the classical sources, that is, the region of Kābul (Daffinà 1967: 79-80, n. 12). Actually, Kuwayama (1999: 57) has conjectured that this kingdom covered an area extending probably to Wardak in the southwest and to the Kōtal-e Lataband in the east with Kābul as its centre, substantially accepting the interpretation of Marquart (1901: 288). In the *Monography of the Western Countries of the Tang Shu*, it is reported that to the north of Xieyu (that is, Zābulistān), there was Hushijian, and that the latter lay to the southeast of Bāmiyān. Therefore, Hushijian should be Fulishisatangna (Kuwayama 1987: 264; 2002: 198). At the same time, Kuwayama has shown that Kābul, after emerging as the heir of Kāpiśī in the second half of the 7th century, was called Jibin in the Tang sources (Kuwayama 2002: 60), although Jibin corresponds, more properly, to the region stretching from Kābul to the Indus. Fulishisatangna would overlap with Jibin, which does not seem to fit in well with Xuanzang's description.

Among the scanty information on Fulishisatangna provided to us by the Chinese pilgrim we learn that, while the climate was cold in Caojuzha/Zābul (Beal 1884, II: 284), it was 'icy cold' in Fulishisatangna. The great extension in length of the country and the fact that it was a mountainous, gelid region, together with the fact that it lay north of Zābul, leads us to think that Fulishisatangna might rather correspond to parts of present-day Ūrūzgān, Nāwor and Wardak regions. That Ūrūzgān was inhabited by Turks in the 7th century appears from the two inscriptions first published by Bivar (1954: 112-18; cf. Mac Dowall & Taddei 1978: 244). In confirmation of this hypothesis, as explained by Minoru Inaba in the Appendix, is the fact that Fulishisatangna can be restored as *Wulījistān, and may be the same — through metathesis or simple misspelling — as the Wujīristān of the Islamic sources, corresponding to the region between Tagāb in the upper Helmand valley and Nāy Qal'a; or else, in a broader sense, to the mountain regions west of Kābul and Ghaznī up to the province of Ūrūzgān. The upper Arghandāb valley may have been one of the routes connecting Zābulistān to Fulishisatangna.

One difficulty in identifying the kingdom of Fulishisatangna with the above-mentioned regions is that

it is not immediately easy to see why Xuanzang should choose to pass through such an unfavourable place instead of directing his steps to Kābul on his way back from Zābul to Kāpiśī and farther on to China. From the account of Fulishisatangna given in both the *Xiyu ji* and the *Life*, nothing special seems to have attracted him apart from the fact that the king of the country and the people were devout Buddhists. This was, no doubt, good enough a reason, but the most likely explanation is that the pilgrim, as part of the retinue of the King of Kāpiśī, had to accompany the latter, who was probably paying a visit to the king of Fulishisatangna to remind him of his condition as vassal king (Foucher 1947, II: 232).

It is probable that Fulishisatangna enjoyed some sort of autonomous power for only a short time. After Xuanzang, it is not mentioned in the Chinese sources, and it can be maintained that it merged into Zābulistān, as once hypothesised by Marquart (1901: 288-89) and now confirmed by the Tang-e Safedak inscription (Lee & Sims-Williams 2003: 166). Jibin was now a new kingdom with an old name centred on Kābul, which had emerged from the weakening of Kāpiśī in the second half of the 7th century.

The Buddhist Kingdom of Zābul

It is not surprising that 'some ten stūpas' in Zābul were thought to have been built by Aśoka. Attribution of important Buddhist establishments to the Mauryan emperor was common throughout India, and Aśoka's presence had in fact left its marks in the regions south of the Hindukush, as is testified by the famous bilingual inscription of Qandahār. The point is that to date we have no evidence of early Buddhist monuments there or, as pointed out above, even of Buddhist monuments of the Kuṣāṇa or post-Kuṣāṇa periods, with the exception of the Nāwor trilingual and, perhaps, of the earliest sanctuary of Tapa Sardār. Zābul and Fulishisatangna are apparently a blank until perhaps the 5th or 6th century. As has been mentioned, early evidence of a Buddhist establishment only comes from beyond their eastern borders, in Wardak. As to the southwestern portion of Zābul's territory, the Kuṣāṇas never held sway in Qandahār, nor, presumably, in Zamīn Dāwar. The excavations conducted in the citadel of Qandahār (McNicoll & Ball 1996; Helms 1997) have yielded no evidence of any Kuṣāṇa presence.

It is difficult to form an opinion on the matter. These regions may have been sparsely inhabited and may not have had any strategic importance for centuries, remaining pasture lands until they were involved in the process which saw the re-emergence of Kāpiśī and the emergence of Bāmiyān after the mid-6th century AD. It is interesting to note in this respect that in Qandahār there is a gap in the occupation between c. A.D. 400 and the early Islamic period (Helms 1997: 92). The region may have been of little concern either for the Kidāras, who dominated the Kāpiśī-Kābul area in the mid-5th

century, or for the Alxon rulers who followed them and controlled the region until about A.D. 560⁽⁴⁰⁾.

The region of Ghaznī may have gained, or regained, importance only with the Nēzak kings, with the Alxon who re-emigrated to southeastern Afghanistan in the second half of the 6th century (Aram 1996: 520; Grenet 2002: 215), and, later on, with the Turks. We find uncertain mention of Zābul in the *Wei shu* (Vol. 102) as a kingdom which sent a mission to the capital of the northern Wei in 477 along with Jichiang/Juduolo (northwest India under the Kidāras) and Śrāvastī (Kuwayama 2002: 128). If this is in fact the case, then the emergence of a real state organization in Zābulistān should be shifted back to the time of the establishment of Alxon rule south of the Hindukush, although only much later was Zābul to be regularly mentioned in the Chinese sources. The limited extent of archaeological research in Zābulistān (amounting to nil in Zamīn Dāwar and Moqor-Qarabāgh) leaves much uncertainty about the actual situation.

The evidence of the Hephthalites south of the mountains is still much debated. The two main literary sources regarding the Hephthalites, the *Wei shu* (Hephthalite section in the Western Regions chapter) and Songyun's travel account, mention neither Bāmiyān nor Kāpīśī among the territories they controlled. Thus it has been argued that they entered Gandhāra from Tokhāristān along an itinerary east of the Hindukush (Kuwayama 1999: 37-41; 2002: 125-35). In such a scenario they could not have been in a position to hold sway over Zābulistān. The numismatic evidence tells a different story, however. The Alxon ('Hephthalite') coinage is documented in Kāpīśī-Kābul by the end of the 4th century (Aram 1996: 521-22, 526) or a few decades later (Grenet 2002: 206-11). In their recent contributions to the history of the Hephthalites and the Western Turks, J. Harmatta and Boris A. Litvinskij also support the traditional view of the Hephthalite presence south of the Hindukush (Litvinskij 1996; Harmatta & Litvinskij 1996)⁽⁴¹⁾. As for Marquart (1901: 247), he maintained that Zābulistān is a name of Hephthalite origin, a thesis accepted and elaborated by Ghirshman in his influential book on the 'Chionites-Ephthalites' (Ghirshman 1948: 104-8).

The Nēzak kings, who ruled Zābulistān for quite a long time, may not have been Huns, as maintained by Göbl (1967, II: 71 ff.), and might well have been local rulers in the Kāpīśī-Kābul-Zābul region before Barha Tegīn (Aram 1999-2000: 135-36), being possibly identifiable with the 'Khinḡal line' of Kāpīśī hypothesized by Kuwayama (1999: 36 ff.). Mac Dowall and Taddei (1978: 251-53) were also inclined to think of them as Turks. The fact that their coins are in the Hephthalite tradition is not *per se* an indication of their ethnic identity. The scenario opened by the re-emigration of the Alxon from India to southeastern Afghanistan and their clash with the Nēzak (Aram 1996: 531; 1999-2000: 133-34) is somewhat confused⁽⁴²⁾, and it is even harder to gain a view in any

historical depth of the period characterized by the Alxon-Nēzak monetary issues, attributed to a mint in Ghaznī (Aram 1996: 532; 1999-2000: 134) and datable to the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th century. However, the already mentioned inscription from Tang-e Safedak, recording the establishment of a *stūpa* in the northern provinces of Zābulistān in A.D. 724, is due to 'Alkhis, son of Khuras, lord of Gazan', a name 'reminiscent of the so-called "Alkhon" Huns' (Lee & Sims-Williams 2003: 164-66).

The Western Turks had occupied northern Afghanistan in A.D. 558 after defeating the Huns. They succeeded in creating a kingdom, Bāmiyān, able to attract long-distance trade to the detriment of Gandhāra (Kuwayama 2002: 153-54). In 629, as reported by Xuanzang, Fulishisantangna was ruled by a Turkish king and a devout Buddhist (Beal 1884, II: 285), while nothing is said of the ethnic stock and religious inclination of the rulers of Zābul. By the early 7th century, Turkish tribes (probably Khalaj; below) were established not only in Fulishisantangna, but also to the south of the mountains. Kuwayama (1999: 61) argues that a Turkish population, although still a minority, were already present in Kābul and Zābulistān between 609 and 629, and probably of Buddhist persuasion, like their kin in Fulishisantangna. The fact that Zābul is mentioned in the Chinese sources in or before 607 along with Bāmiyān and Kāpīśī (it is the date given in the *Xiyu Tuji*, or *Illustrated Account of the Western Regions*; cf. Kuwayama 1999: 39) may point to the same conclusion. After 661, Barha Tegīn established a Turkish dynasty in Kābul. He was followed by a ruler (probably his son) bearing the title of Khorāsān Tegīn Shāh, who ruled for a very long time, until some time before 738/39. Huichao met him at the time of his journey in 726 (*ibid.*: 59, 62, 65), when both Kābul/Jibin and Zābul were definitely ruled by Turkish kings, related by blood (*ibid.*: 62) and all Buddhist (Yang et al. 1984: 50-51), like Alchis of Ghaznī. It is difficult to fit into this frame the ruler Pangul, of Zoroastrian faith, whose very existence has only recently been established by Humbach (1996). He is known from a few coins, and appears to have ruled in Zābul, Arachosia and Gandhāra in the 8th century.

The pressure on Zābul and Kābul exercised by the Muslims (who had established a firm base in Sīstān) from the 650s onwards was a danger, but it also represented a possibility for political alliances, and in fact the first king of Zābul joined the Muslim army under

⁽⁴⁰⁾ We follow Grenet (2002: 205-14), but it should be kept in mind that the chronology of the Kidāras and the Alxon remains unsettled. See also below.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Litvinskij does not discuss the point in the detail, but believes in the presence of the Hephthalites in Bāmiyān and Ghaznī attributing the patronage of the largest Bāmiyān Buddhas to them and dating the late phase of Tapa Sardār to their rule (p. 158). Harmatta does not discuss the point either, but — like Göbl and Aram — considers Kāpīśī as having been under the control of the Hephthalites before Turkish rule (p. 371).

⁽⁴²⁾ See below, however.

Salm b. Ziyād, governor of Sīstān — that very army against which he had been fighting (cf. Rehman 1979: 66-67). This move seems to have had the aim of establishing independent rule in Zābul, al-Rukhaj and Bost (*ibid.*: 62; Murgotten 1916-24, II: 147-48 [397]), which had become independent from the kingdom of Jibin in Kāpīšī-Kābul some time between 686/87 and 693/94 (Kuwayama 1999: 64)⁽⁴³⁾. Relations between the Turkish rulers of the two countries were always to be very close, as is shown by the list of joint diplomatic missions they were to send to the Tang court from 710 onwards, when a second ruler, the *xielifa* Shiqu'er, identifiable with the Qaradaci Eltäbär Zābul and recognized by the Tang Emperor in 720 (*ibid.*: 64; Petech 1988: 190), was ruling Zābul. It is now recognized that the title of the ruler of Zābulistān, read as *zambīll/zunbīl* by Marquart (1901: esp. 250, but *passim*; 1915: 281; cf. also Scarcia 1966) and *zibil* by Harmatta (Harmatta & Litvinskij 1996: 379), was definitely *rtbīl* (*rutbīl*), a corrupted form of the Turkish title *eltäber*⁽⁴⁴⁾. In the following pages, we will in all cases use the form *rtbīl* to indicate the rulers of Zābulistān.

Huichao maintains that the latter were different from the Turks ruling Tokhāristān, to the north of the Hindukush (Kuwayama 1991: 116; 1998: 40), and it has been argued that they were Khalaj Turks (Rehman 1979: 39-45), who regarded themselves as a nation distinct from other Turks (Lee & Sims-Williams 2003: 168). They are known in the Chinese sources either as Hedaluozhi or Goluodazhi (not considering minor variants), which Petech (1988: 193) restores as *Xadalač(i) or *Kadalač(i), and are taken to be the founders of the Zābul dynasty around the mid-7th century, then spreading to Kāpīšī-Kābul and Gandhāra (*ibid.*)⁽⁴⁵⁾. The new Chinese name of Hedaluozhi for Zābul in substitution of Caojuzha in the Xianqing period (656-60) may be associated with the establishment of the Turkish kingdom of Zābul (*ibid.*: 190).

The Khalaj seem to have inhabited the regions north of the Hindukush, and in fact two documents in the Bactrian language, a bill of sale and a deed of gift from Rob (present-day Rūy) in the upper Samangān valley, dated A.D. 678 and 710, respectively, contain early references to them (Sims-Williams 1996: 646-48). The title *iltäbir* also occurs in the first of these documents (*ibid.*: 646). The Khalaj had in part already moved, and were probably still moving, to the south of the Hindukush, as maintained by Petech (1988) and Kuwayama (1999: 61). Ghirshman (1948: 106) had maintained that they had perhaps penetrated in the region of Ghaznī and further south as early as the end of the 6th century. Istakhrī (writing in about 930) actually reports that

The Khalaj are a class of Turks who in the days of old (*fī qadīm al-ayyām*) came to the country stretching between India and the districts of Sijistān, behind Ghūr. (cf. Minorsky 1940: 430).

According to the *Hudūd al-'ālam* (24, 22a, 19, 22), in Ghaznī,

a town situated on the slope of a mountain [... which] lies in Hindūstān and formerly belonged to it [...] on the frontier between the Muslims and the infidels [and] in the limits (*hudūd*) of the boroughs which we have enumerated, live the Khalaj Turks who possess many sheep [...]. (Minorsky 1982: 111).

al-Khwārizmī, writing in the 10th century, says that the Khalaj were a remnant of the Hephthalites (Bosworth & Clauson 1965: 8). This could actually mean that they were the Turks who had moved westwards before the Turks who defeated the Hephthalite confederation in 558.

The kingdom of Zābul was to experience the first serious difficulties in A.D. 656-57, when Kābul was conquered by 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Samara⁽⁴⁶⁾, who had subjugated Bost and al-Rukhaj immediately before (Gold 1976: 68). He again advanced as far as Kābul in 663-64, raiding the country where the people had apostatized (Murgotten 1916-24, II: 146 [396]). The following year he moved to Kābul from Merv (that is, via the northern route), to descend to Bost (and thus to Zābulistān) after the siege (Briggs 1829, I: 2; Gold 1976: 85). Again in 671-72 the territory from Bost and al-Rukhaj up to Kābul passed under the control of the Muslims led by 'Ubayd Allāh (Gold 1976: 75). These are probably the years, as argued by Kuwayama (2002: 182), when the sanctuary of Tapa Sardār (Early Phase II) suffered the extensive damage that led to its reconstruction on the basis of a much modified plan around A.D. 700 (Late Phase I). The sanctuary was, significantly, transformed into a sort of fortress, where all the open-air spaces that characterized the early monastery were abolished.

Although Kābul revolted in 681, it again came under Muslim control in 686 together with Zābul (Gold 1976: 80, 85). The Muslims had been defeated at Ghaznī by the *rtbīl* in 683 or a little earlier (cf. Bombaci 1959: 4; Rehman 1979: 67)⁽⁴⁷⁾. Ten years

⁽⁴³⁾ Kuwayama refers to Inaba (1991: 47-52).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ 'Rutbīl' is the form used by Rehman (1979) and Lee & Sims-Williams (2003).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ This hypothesis should be discussed considering also Kuwayama's reconstruction of the history of Jibin, whose dynasty changed from the non-Turkish to the Turkish line in the years between 661 and 719 (cf. Kuwayama 1999: 55).

⁽⁴⁶⁾ The stages of the advance of the Arabs from Sīstān to northwestern India are reported in Bosworth (1968); we also refer the reader to Rehman (1979: 53 ff., 65 ff.). The present reconstruction takes into special account the *Tārīkh-e Sīstān*, and aims, in particular, at understanding the situation in Ghaznī.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ This is the earliest mention of the name of Ghaznī, in its ancient form, Ganza, in the Arab sources (*ibid.*). On the name of Ghaznī see Marquart (1901: 256) and Benveniste (1935). The question whether Zābul really corresponds to Ghaznī has never been fully discussed. Cf. Kuwayama (1998: 134-35).

later, in 693-94, the roads were blockaded by war waged anew against the successor of the first *rtbyl* (Gold 1976: 86-87). Military action was resumed in 698-99, when the *rtbyl* again got the upper hand after blocking the mountain paths and passes (Murgotten 1916-24, II: 150 [399]) and in 701-2.

The *rtbyl* suffered a serious defeat from the 'Peacock army' on the last-mentioned occasion, but found an ally in 'Abd al Rahmān ibn Muhammad al-Ash'as, who was at odds with Hajjāj, Governor General of the eastern provinces of the Caliphate, and 'treated with kindness the people of Sīstān and Bost and of the districts as far as Zābol, Kābol, Hindustan, and the Indus valley' (Gold 1976: 92). In 710 Zābul joined Kāpišī's mission to the Tang emperor (Kuwayama 2002: 196) — a circumstance that is probably to be seen in the light of the information offered by the *Tang shu* (Zābul section, vol. 221b), according to which Jibin, around that period, acquired hegemony over Zābul, also gaining military leadership in the war against the Arabs, and recruited young people in Zābul (cf. Kuwayama 1999: 55). Another joint Kāpišī-Zābul mission was sent to China in 720 (Id. 2002: 196-97). This state of subordination came to an end before 726 (Id. 1999: 56). We actually know that in 724 the *tegīn* of Zābul sent a message to the Tang emperor; before that time he was a *xielifa*, a minor title (cf. Petech 1988: 192).

A peace treaty between the *rtbyl* and the Muslims had been signed in 712 (Gold: 95)⁽⁴⁸⁾, and a long period of calm had followed. In 726 the Kharijites (who were the real cause of the Arabs' difficulties) conquered Sīstān, and in 727-28 the *rtbyl* struck a very heavy blow against the Muslims (*ibid.*: 101; Bosworth 1968: 73) after blocking the roads.

The last mission sent by the ruler of Zābul to the Tang court dates back to 753 (Kuwayama 2002: 196-97), after the battle of Talas in 751, that is: things then began to turn increasingly worse for the Buddhist kingdoms of Western Central Asia. It is our belief that the historians have underestimated the importance of the Tang control and influence on these kingdoms. Not only their prosperity, but also their very existence largely depended on the direct Tang presence in Xinjiang and in present-day Kighizistān⁽⁴⁹⁾. According to the Tang sources, in A.D. 658 the sixteen kingdoms situated to the west of Khotan and east of Persia had been incorporated with the *duhufu*, or Protectorate General, of Anxi (Kuwayama 1987: 258), and there is no reason to consider Tang control as having always been purely nominal.

In 768-69, after several decades of tranquillity, things grew extremely difficult for the rulers of Zābul (Abbasid rule had been established in the meanwhile). By order of Ma'n ibn Zā'ida al-Shaybānī, Yazīd ibn 'Arif al-Hamdānī blocked the roads against the *rtbyl*; he was then defeated by M'an, who made thirty thousand prisoners (Gold 1976: 114). Later on, in 795, Ibrāhīm ibn Jibrīl arrived as far as Kābul, which was raided; it is highly probable that Zābul was also attacked on that occasion; al-Ya'qūbī's *Kitāb al-buldān* reports that

not only did the kings of Tokhāristān and al-Dahāqīn join that army, but also al-Hasan, Shīr of Bāmiyān, took part in it. They invaded the country and conquered places such as the city of Ghorband, the Pass of Ghorband, *sārḥ.w.d.??d.lāstān* and Shāh Bahār, in which were idols worshipped by the people. They destroyed and burnt them. (de Goeje 1967: 290-91)⁽⁵⁰⁾.

We cannot be certain that the 'Shāh Bahār', or (*mahā*)*rājavihāra* corresponds to the sanctuary of Tapa Sardār (which, as said above, we know as *Kanekkya mahārāja-vihāra*), but it is a hypothesis which we should carefully consider, because it fits well with the other archaeological and historical data.

Very serious for the Zabulites must have been the road blockage made in A.D. 820 by the Kharijites, who had got the upper hand in Sīstān, and who 'would constantly attack Ghur, India, and the Indus Valley [Sind]' (*ibid.*: 140). The Kharijites had probably settled deep into the Shāhi territories towards the end of the Turkish rule (Rehman 1979: 61). The *Hudūd al-'ālam* actually reports:

Gardīz, a frontier town between Ghaznīn and Hindūstān, situated on the summit of a mound (tall) and possessing a strong fortress (*hisār*) with three walls. The inhabitants are Khārijites. (Minorsky 1970: 91).

The end of the Buddhist kingdom of Zābul came, as we well know, with Yaq'ūb b. Laith in the early 870s.

Buddhists and tīrthikas

We have already seen that according to Xuanzang there were 'several hundred *saṅghārāmas*, with 1000 or so priests' in Zābul, and some *stūpas* ascribed to Aśoka (Beal 1884, II: 284). There were also several dozen *deva* temples, and the sectarians of various denominations dwelt together (cf. Kuwayama 1999: 29). The most powerful of these were the *tīrthikas* (*waidao*, i.e., the Brahmins), followers of a god whose name has usually been transcribed as Zun(a) or Sun(a), but which is to be rendered as Zhuna (<*dz'iuna, <*siuna; Kuwayama 1999: 29; 2002: 201-2; cf. Sims-Williams 1996: 647-48). He dwelt on mount Zhunahira (<*dz'iu[su]nahila; cf. Kuwayama 1999: 27) on the southern border of the kingdom, and votaries of different classes not only from Zābul but also from neighbouring countries, including kings, assembled together every year bearing offerings to him.

Discussion of the god Zhuna is far beyond the scope of this book, and we will confine ourselves to a few considerations, referring the reader to the bibliography

⁽⁴⁸⁾ In 711 according to Bosworth (1968: 69).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ The Chu valley was conquered by the Chinese in A.D. 679, and in 692 Suiye replaced Qarāshāhr as one of the Four Garrisons. Cf. Forte (1994: esp. 45-46, with bibliography).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ We thank M. Inaba for making this passage known to us and translating it into English.

on the subject provided by Tucci (1997: 137, n. 27), to which the works of Gianroberto Scarcia (1965, 1967) should be added. Zhuna has generally been (although differently) interpreted as a Brahmanic god (Marquart & De Groot 1915: 285, 288; Filliozat 1948: 316-17; Tucci 1997), but other interpretations, like that proposed by Scarcia, should also be taken into account⁽⁵¹⁾. Kuwayama, on the basis of attentive re-examination of the Chinese sources and the archaeological evidence from Kāpiśī, has argued that the god Zhuna of the *Sui-shu* and of Xuanzang's *Da Tang xiyu ji* had first resided in a shrine on Mount Conglin (Pamir), corresponding to the earlier sanctuary of Khayr Khāna at the northern gates of Kābul, and had left for a mountain, which became known as Zhunahira, on the southern border of Zābulistān some time between 606 and 629, the year of Xuanzang's visit⁽⁵²⁾. In Kāpiśī his cult was superseded by that of Sūrya, whose marble images were installed in the new sanctuary of Khayr Khāna (Kuwayama 1999: 25-36; 2002: 200-7).

The fact that Xuanzang calls the gods' priests *īrthikas* and defines them heretics practising asceticism, strongly points to considering Zhuna an Indian or Indianized god, and interpretation of the figure as Śiva (Tucci) or as a god analogous to Kumāra (Filliozat) in the context of 7th-century Zābulistān is highly likely. However, Kuwayama's reconstruction of the god's vicissitudes is in contrast with these interpretations. That the cult of Śiva in any of his forms could, as a result of religious controversy, have given way to worship of Sūrya is not very likely. Sivaism was extremely aggressive in the 7th century, and held positions even to the north of the Hindukush, as for instance at Dilberjin⁽⁵³⁾, and the followers of Sūrya, although able to exercise strong power locally, would never have been in a position to wage religious war against it. In addition, Xuanzang emphasises the strength of Sivaism in Kāpiśī in the first half of the 7th century (Beal 1884, I: 55). If Kuwayama's reconstruction is correct, the Zhuna who left Khayr Khāna was not Śiva, nor, for that matter, Kumāra⁽⁵⁴⁾.

The Bactrian documents published by N. Sims-Williams which we mentioned above show that the worship of Zhuna was also widespread in northern Afghanistan. The bill of sale of A.D. 678 mentions Zhun-lad, 'Given by Zhun', as a ruler of the kingdom of Rob, and the deed of gift of A.D. 710 mentions his κηδο or priest, a term which was previously known only from its Chinese transcription, *jiduo* (Sims-Williams 1996: 646-48; cf. Daffinà 1962). Sims-Williams wonders whether the sanctuary of Dokhtar-e Nōshirwān might have been devoted to the worship of Zhuna's (*ibid.*: 648)⁽⁵⁵⁾.

Whatever the nature of the god, the increasingly strong presence of Brahmanism in eastern Afghanistan remains a fact. We have no idea about the religious creed of the Nēzak kings. The fire-altar on the reverse of their coins is certainly of Iranian origin but can easily be interpreted as an altar for the *homa* ritual, largely

performed in northwestern Buddhism (Verardi 1994); moreover, their personal faith, as in the case of the Kuṣāṇas, may not have prevented protection and patronage to the *saṅgha*. It is perhaps easier to form an idea about the kind of patronage the Alxon rulers may have granted when, after the mid-6th century A.D., they re-emigrated from India to southeastern Afghanistan. Naraṇa-Narendra appears from his name to have been a devotee of Viṣṇu (he also introduced the Vishnuite symbols of *cakra* and *śaṅkha* on his Gandharan coins; Alram 1999-2000: 132), and he may have supported early organized Hindu worship in eastern Afghanistan⁽⁵⁶⁾: the large number of *deva* temples seen by Xuanzang presupposes that Hinduism had enjoyed strong patronage in the decades preceding the pilgrim's journey. It is possible, in this respect, that the clash of the Alxon with the Nēzak took on religious connotations.

The presence of Brahmanism in southeastern Afghanistan was to be emphasized by the marble production of the Turki Shāhis of Kābul in the 8th century. The fact that associated Jibin-Zābul missions (a sign of political and military alliance against the Muslims; Kuwayama 2002: 258) were sent to the Tang court until 753 would indicate that the Turki Shāhis supported Buddhism at that time⁽⁵⁷⁾. What happened later on is a matter of speculation. In 765 the Gaṇeśa image now in the Pīr Rathan Nāth Dargāh in Kābul was apparently consecrated by Śrī Shāhi Khiṅgala, a Kābul Shāh identifiable with the Bofuzhun of the *Jiu Tang shu*, who had also become the king of Uḍḍiyāna or Swāt

(⁵¹) Ghirshman (1948: 123) maintained that the cult of Zhuna originated in Central Asia, and was brought to southern Afghanistan by the Chionites-Hephthalites.

(⁵²) As is well known, Marquart (1915: especially 271-72) places this temple in Zamīn Dāwar, where, however, no archaeological surveys have been made.

(⁵³) Cf. also Sims-Williams (1996: 647-48).

(⁵⁴) Srinivasan (1997-98) has collected all the known images of Kumāra from Gandhāra and the surrounding regions; the earliest ones date back to the Kuṣāṇa or late Kuṣāṇa period, but the large majority are datable from the 5th century onwards. An impressive late slab representing Śiva and his family, including Kumāra, has been published by Sherrier (1991).

(⁵⁵) This suggestion adds to the various interpretations offered by scholars to explain the meaning of the famous painting. According to Mode (1992), the figure represented is probably Ōhrmazd/Xurmazd, whose presence in the Kholm valley should be understood in connection with that of Sogdian merchants; for Klimburg-Salter (1993), the painting may represent a royal personage to be seen in connection with the political change and instability of northern Afghanistan in the 7th-9th century; for Grenet (1995), the painting represents Mithra.

(⁵⁶) Narendra Nārāyaṇa is the successor of Mihirakula, who was a persecutor of the Buddhists according to Xuanzang (cf. Beal 1884, I: 168). Kalhaṇa (I, 313-16) maintains that Mihirakula opposed the followers of Buddhism and the *mlecchas*, and supported orthodoxy (cf. Stein 1900, I: 46-47).

(⁵⁷) After the death of Empress Wu, the Tang emperors — in particular Xuanzong (713-755) — endeavoured to oppose excessive Buddhist power, forbidding further temple building etc., but posed no fundamental threat to the organization of the Order. Cf. Tonami 1988.

twenty years before (Kuwayama 2002: 250-59). We can assume, with Kuwayama (*ibid.*: 248), that Khiṅgala was a follower of Brahmanism, which had indeed become ‘an ascendant religion against the declining Buddhism’. The existence of Hindu temples in eastern Afghanistan and northwestern India is clear indication of this ascendancy. Remains of Hindu temples have been discovered in Konar (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1959), Kāpiśī (Khayr Khāna and Tapa Skandar)⁽⁵⁸⁾ and as far north as Dilberjin (Kruglikova 1974: 44-48; 1976: 93-96)⁽⁵⁹⁾. A Hindu temple was recently discovered at Barikoṭ in the Swāt Valley (Callieri et al. 2000: 204-13)⁽⁶⁰⁾.

The pressure exercised by the Brahmins on the Buddhist rulers, a common occurrence in 7th-8th century India⁽⁶¹⁾, probably grew to the point that the *saṅgha* could no longer oppose the *tīrthikas* when, from the mid-8th century onwards, the Buddhist kingdoms of western Central Asia (Jibin and Zābul among them) were no longer able to count on Tang support. Brahmanism, already strong in Kāpiśī, Lampaka, Nagarahāra and Gandhāra at the time of Xuanzang (Beal 1884, I: 55, 90-91, 98), could be kept at bay only thanks to the Tang presence in western Central Asia, and in fact even the king of Brahmanized Gandhāra was a devout Buddhist at the time of Huichao’s journey (Yang et al. 1984: 49), which took place before the Tang disastrously withdrew from Central Asia. The Buddhist monasteries of Western Central Asia — from Merv to Kashmīr, and from the Chu Valley to Ghaznī in Zābulistān — depended on the Tang presence outside China’s proper borders, as is demonstrated not only by the fact that they were established or reconstructed around A.D. 700, but also by their prodigious artistic output, showing strong Tang stylistic influence.

Huichao reports that in this period there were ‘many monasteries and monks’ in Zābulistān (Yang et al. 1984: 51), and that the situation was favourable to Buddhism in Gandhāra as well (*ibid.*: 48-50). Mahāyāna Buddhism was practised there, while Hīnayāna Buddhism was followed in Kāpiśī, and both Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna in Bāmiyān (*ibid.*: 50-52). Huichao’s statement cannot be verified in this respect because of the scarcity of archaeological and textual evidence, but it is worth recalling that the monastery of Tapa Shotor at Haḍḍa was Sarvastivādin (Tarzi 1976: 409; Salomon 1999: 177). Tapa Sardār is the only sanctuary in Zābul whose iconographic programme may give us some clues as to the nature of the cult, apparently pointing, at least until

the mid-8th century, to a form of developed Hīnayāna⁽⁶²⁾.

After 751, things must have changed very quickly. The pressure of the Brahmins grew in Zābulistān as elsewhere. The Sakāwand temple in Lōgar, mentioned in several Muslim sources⁽⁶³⁾, which attracted Hindu worshippers ‘from the remotest parts of Hindustan’ (cf. Elliot 1869: 172) may have been either constructed or enlarged in this period, and the Buddhists were obliged to compromise, as was happening in other parts of the Subcontinent. The addition of an image of a goddess modelled on Durgā Māhiṣamardinī in Chapel 23 at Tapa Sardār (Taddei 1973; Taddei & Verardi 1978: 47-58) certainly dates back to this period⁽⁶⁴⁾. The goddess, who must have been known with a Buddhist name⁽⁶⁵⁾, was there to satisfy the entreaties of the lay devotees, who would otherwise have been driven towards the rival Hindu cults.

(58) For Khayr Khāna, cf. Hackin & Carl 1936; Bernard & Grenet 1981; Kuwayama 1999: 33-36; for Tapa Skandar, cf. Kuwayama 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1980.

(59) The Sivaite phase of the Dilberjin temple was initially dated to the Kuṣāṇa period; the painting with Śiva and Pārvatī is, however, definitely much later, and the analogy seen by Kruglikova (despite her proposed chronology) with the Umāmaheśvara stela from Tapa Skandar was correct. According to Lo Muzio (1999: 59-61) the divine couple did not hold a central position, but was charged to play the role of assisting a local goddess.

(60) Clearly, the existence of Hindu temples can be reconstructed from the finds of Hindu images (a few pieces have added in recent years to the inventory made by Kuwayama [1978], as well as from the literary evidence (see below for a temple of the goddess in Lōgar).

(61) This is the period when the majority of the Buddhist kingdoms were overthrown. Historians of India generally show little understanding of the question. Cf. Verardi (1996: 232 ff., 242 ff.; 2003).

(62) This topic will be discussed by Verardi in an article to appear in a volume in memory of Maurizio Taddei.

(63) Its exact location is not mentioned in the sources, but the present Sakāwand village is about 20 km southwest of Barakī Barak (cf. Rehman 1979: 12-13).

(64) Taddei (2003: 395, 409) suggested 8th-century dating for this image, but further specification in the sense indicated here seems possible.

(65) Taddei (1973: 211-12) expressed the view that the goddess may have been a local deity that took over Durgā’s outward appearance with the emergence of Hindu cults. We rather think that we are in the presence of a process similar to that very well attested in eastern India, where Hindu deities were incorporated into Buddhism in the attempt to contain the advance of Brahmanism. The change of name of Brahminic gods (e.g. Śakra for Indra) reflects time-honoured Buddhist practice.

4. TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY

Today we are in a better position to suggest a chronology for the Buddhist caves of Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī than we were twenty-five years ago. Although we have no epigraphic record from the area, on the evidence deriving from typological analysis and improved knowledge of the history of the Ghaznī region we can indicate a time span restricted to the second half of the 7th century for the generality of the cave groups. Tapa Zaytūn is later, and can be attributed to the end of the 8th or to the 9th century. Geographic factors are also important to clarify the picture.

Typologically — as emerges very clearly from our discussion in Chapter 2 — many of the caves are closely connected with those at Bāmiyān, whose monuments were built from c. A.D. 600 throughout the 7th and even the 8th century, as Klimburg-Salter (1989: esp. 38 ff.) and Kuwayama (2002: 140 ff., 156 ff.) have shown. The cave group at Kakrak is generally held to be even later.

Some architectural features, like the domes directly rising on square rooms without intermediate squinches, as at Tapa Zaytūn, actually point to a late date. The introduction of Sasanian domed rooms was relatively late, considering that at Tapa Maranjān, datable to the 6th-7th century or later (Fussman & Le Berre 1976: 98-99; Kuwayama 2002: 184-87, 190-93)^(*), square rooms were still covered with barrel vaults (Fussman & Le Berre 1976: 97), and the simplification of the Sasanian models, obtained — in the rock-cut architecture — by abolishing the squinches, as at Tapa Zaytūn, Bāmiyān and such places as Taḥelī in Gandhāra (see above), probably represents an even later phase. Regarding the unfinished group at Tapa Zaytūn, in many respects the conception and scale recall the caves of Haybāk, which are probably the very latest Buddhist monuments of Afghanistan^(*), and are equally unfinished^(*).

The Indian prototypes which we can postulate as being at the basis of some architectural schemes are also relatively late. No examples in the Qarabāgh-Jāghūrī region can be considered close to the early and late-ancient rock-cut monuments of western Deccan or to the early temple architecture of India.

Further evidence for not considering the Buddhist settlements of Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī earlier than the late 6th-7th century lies in the pottery collected at Tapa

Hakrīz near Tapa Hesār (Fig. 58). The sherds collected are few, but two of them, now unfortunately lost, preserve stamped medallions, which points, as we have seen (p. 91), to the end of the 6th and 7th century and later.

There is also an important geographical factor to be considered in order to be as precise as possible regarding the chronology of the caves. It is clear that, although the mountain passes to the south of the lake of Nāwor did further lead eastwards to Wardak and Kāpiśī and northwards to Bāmiyān, the region was impracticable enough to advise anybody, and traders in particular, to follow a similar route if others were practicable. Only a serious and prolonged impediment to travel along the normal route (that described by Bombaci, p. 95, n. 36) could prompt choice of the alternative, challenging route through the Upper Arghandāb valley, and, what is more, convince the merchant community to patronize the construction of monuments often planned on a monumental scale, and the Buddhist monks to move there. This must have happened during a period, or periods, when the Qandahār-Ghaznī-Kābul/Kāpiśī road was unsafe or even blocked, and the traditional monastic strongholds along it half-abandoned.

It was probably in the difficult years from the 650s onwards that the early caves groups of Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī were built. Tapa Sanawbar, where classical motifs are still present (Cave 2), cannot be much later than this period, because the artistic production that we find in the region dating from about A.D. 700, at Tapa Sardār (Late Phase I) and Fonduqistān, leaves the Gandhāran tradition behind. The new trend is particularly clear at Tapa Sardār, where the reconstructed monastery shows imagery following new aesthetic models largely influenced by Tang art, replacing the

(*) Kuwayama maintains that the two phases of the Buddhist sanctuary should be dated to the 7th and the first half of the 8th century, respectively.

(*) No recent study has been devoted to the caves at Haybāk, whose possible date has been the object of an exchange of views with Sh. Kuwayama.

(*) See *Excursus* above (p. 86).

earlier style still largely following classical patterns, as had been the case in Early Phase II (above) and in such sites as Tapa Maranjān, late Tapa Shotor (Tarzi 1976) and Kharwār.

It is probable that all the caves that were in fact finished, like many caves at Nāy Qal'a, belong to this early period. As we have seen, a group of caves could be completed in few years if duly financed. Cult places and adequate quarters for the monks to live in and travellers to find accommodation could be built in a short time, but there must have been the sense that the investment would be worth it. In our case, there must have been the conviction that the normal route would not be practicable for the caravans supporting the *saṅgha* for quite a long period. At the same time, the Arab invaders could not yet have been perceived as good allies of the merchant community, and thus capable of replacing the *saṅgha*. The second half of the 7th century seems to fit well with such a scenario.

Patronage of the huge, ambitious cave group of Tapa Zaytūn, which typologically appears to be the latest in the region, probably did not occur before 768-769, when the situation again became difficult in Zābulistān. The fact that these caves had been planned on an unprecedented scale but were all left unfinished, suggests on the one hand that increasing importance was being attributed to the Upper Arghandāb route (and that, therefore, the usual route was thought to be lost forever) and, on the other hand, that the situation was not yet perceived as approaching final disaster. Buddhism was still thought of as having a future. This may point to the 820s, when the Kharijites blocked the roads and attacked India (i.e. the Northwest), or, better perhaps, to the 860s, when Yaq'ūb b. Laith might well have initially been seen simply as one of the many raiders who had waged war against Zābul in the two previous centuries without succeeding in subduing it⁽⁶⁹⁾. Yaq'ūb ibn Laith's military campaign was short and decisive and this may explain why Tapa Zaytūn remained unfinished.

There may have been another reason to concentrate on the alternative route of the Upper Arghandāb valley arising from the growing pressure of Brahmanism after Tang protection of the Buddhist kingdoms had come to an end by the mid-8th century. The once friendly, but now Brahmanized kingdom of Kābul, may have turned hostile against the Buddhists of Zābulistān, and may have created a barrier to the east and south, preventing the Zabulites from moving freely to Wardak, Lōgar, Kābul and Gardīz. We have already had occasion to mention the Sakāwand temple in Lōgar, a region bordering Zābul where Sivaism⁽⁷⁰⁾ was very strong, as is shown, among other things, by the final battle which took place in the vicinity of Charkh between Sabuktigīn and the Hindu Shāhi Jayapāla at the end of the 10th century (Rehman 1979: 13, on the authority of the *Tabaqat-e Nāsiri*). If we further bear in mind that raids against the Buddhist monasteries were usually organized by Brahman groups in such situations (Verardi 1996: *passim*; 2003: *passim*) it is possible that a new strategy was envisaged by the Buddhist community to survive. A direct link with the Buddhist kingdom of Bāmiyān — the only other one to survive in the region — was imperative, and the Upper Arghandāb route may have become the pivot of this survival strategy. Further researches are necessary to understand this point, and a careful study of the Qarabāgh-Moqor region, where — as we saw above — a large number of *tapas* are to be found, is, in particular, much needed.

(⁶⁹) It can be surmised that the Kharijites were more interested in fighting the Orthodox than the Buddhists; however, the urgency of arranging back-lines to fight their enemies better may have led to a critical situation in Zābul. Rehman (1979: 62) maintains that the Kharijites, although enemies of the Sīstān governors, never softened their attitude towards the infidels.

(⁷⁰) The Hindu Shāhis were Sivaites (Rehman 1979: 312), like many anti-Buddhist royal houses of northern India.

NĀY QAL'A, WUJĪRISTĀN AND THE KHALAJ

by Minoru Inaba

Among the rock-cut caves of Qarabāgh and Jāghūrī, Nāy Qal'a is to date the only one for which we can find references in the historical sources. According to 'Abd al-Hayy Habībī (1988: 439, n. 6) and Jalālī (1973: 334-35; cf. Verardi 1977: 5, n. 2), Nāy Qal'a is mentioned in the sources as 'Qal'a-ye Nāy'.

A passage of the *Tārīkh-e Bayhaqī*, a Persian chronicle of the 11th century written by the Ghaznavid scribe 'Abū al-Fazl Bayhaqī, describes the departure of the Ghaznavid ruler Mas'ūd b. Mahmūd (1030-1040) from Ghazna (Ghaznīn) on his way to Bost and Herāt in the year 425 (A.D. 1034):

(1) When the time came to move, as the matters in Khorāsān, Khwārazm, Rayy, Jebāl and other provinces were such as I have explained, Amīr Mas'ūd decided to move to Bost, then towards Herāt. He wanted to deal appropriately with all the matters from Herāt, which was the centre of Khorāsān. Amīr Mas'ūd gave the robe of honour to Amīr Sa'id and entrusted the capital Ghaznīn to him, making him sit in the palace of the castle and hold the *mazālem* court. Sarhang Abū 'Alī Kutwāl was put in front of the prince as an adviser and tutor. Other sons of Amīr [Mas'ūd] were sent to the fort of Nāy and Dīrī with household people, servants and courtiers. The robe of honour was given to Amīr Mas'ūd because he accompanied them with royal rein. (Fayyāz 1977: 557-58).

Another passage from the same source describes the preparation made by Mas'ūd for his departure to Khorāsān for the expedition against the Seljuqs:

(2) The first day of Moharram [of 430] (3 October 1038) was Wednesday. On Thursday, the second day of Moharram, *sarāy parda* was brought out and set up at the place behind Bāgh-e Fīrūzī on the platform. Amīr [Mas'ūd] ordered the robe of honour to be given to Amīr Sa'id as he remained at Ghaznīn as an *amīr*. Splendid robes of honour were also given to his chamberlains, secretaries and boon companions, 'Abū 'Alī Kutwāl, 'Abū Sa'id-e Sahl the Chief Secretary and Hasan-e 'Ubayd Allāh the Postmaster. Every apparatus for governmental jobs was included in those robes of honour. The robes for the chamberlains, secretaries and boon companions were the same. Other princes were sent to the fortress of Nāy Mas'ūdī and Dīdī Rū with the forbidden palace as had been ordered and prepared. Amīr [Mas'ūd] started from Ghaznīn on the fourth of Moharram. He arrived at the *sarāy parda* which had been built up in Bāgh-e Fīrūzī and stayed there two days waiting for the departure of all the army and attendants. Then he also departed and moved on. (*ibid.*: 736-37).

Although written here as 'Nāy Mas'ūdī', the fortress can be considered the same as that cited in (1), since the other Ms. of the same source has 'Nāy and Mas'ūdī'. These two passages show that the Nāy fortress was at that time being used as a hiding place for young princes and treasures should some accident or trouble occur during the ruler's absence.

Another Persian chronicle of the same century, the *Tārīkh-e Gardīzī* (*Zayn al-akhbār*), also relates Mas'ūd's departure towards India after the crushing defeat at Dandānaqān by the Seljuqs:

(3) When Amīr [Mawdūd] arrived at Hopyān, he settled there. He (Mas'ūd) sent Amīr Majdūd to Mūltān with twenty thousand cavalry and Amīr Īzadyār to the edge of the mountains of Ghaznīn where were Afghāns and rebels, and said to him (Īzadyār): 'Defend that province lest any disaster arises!' Then he (Mas'ūd) ordered that all the treasures which Amīr Mahmūd had hoarded in many fortresses and places, such as Dīdī Rū, Mandīsh, Nāy Lāmān, Maranj and Sāmad Kūt, should be brought to Ghaznīn. (Habībī 1988: 438).

With all probability, Habībī, the editor of the text, is right in adopting Nāy Lāmān here instead of 'Pāy Lāmān' in the Ms., and in deducing from the name of the other fortress, Dīdī Rū, that it corresponds to the Nāy (or Nāy Mas'ūdī) of the *Tārīkh-e Bayhaqī* (*ibid.*: n. 4; cf. Arends & Epifanova 1991: 119, 157). Habībī refers to the following passage of the *Tārīkh-e Sīstān*, a local history of Sīstān written in the 11th century by an anonymous author:

(4) Whereupon Ya'qūb returned to Sīstān, where, after a short stay, on Saturday, with four days remaining in the first of Rabi', 258 (9 February 872), he left for Kābul with the intention of attacking the *rtbyl*'s son⁽¹⁾. When he reached

(¹) Written as *znbyl* in the Persian text, and read by Gold as 'Zanbil'. This is the title of the ruler of Zābulistān from the 7th to the 9th century. Although the *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* has the form *znbyl*, other sources including Tabarī's chronicle have the form *rtbyl*. The proper reading of this form has been the object of long debate (cf. Marquart 1901: 248 ff.; Scarcia 1965; Harmatta 1969: 405-6; 1996: 365; Bosworth 1994: 91-95; Bombaci 1970: 59; Rehman 1979: 180). I believe that the reading *rtbyl*, which derives, as suggested by Bombaci, from the Turkish title *iltebār*, should be adopted (Inaba 1991: 35; Sims-Williams 2002: 235).

Zābulistān, the *rthyl*'s son ascended to the Nāy Lāmān fortress and sought refuge there. Ya'qūb besieged the fortress and pursued the campaign until he brought [the *rthyl*'s son] down and took him prisoner. Then Ya'qūb left for Balkh, by way of Bāmiyān. When Dā'ud b. 'Abbās, the ruler of Balkh, heard the news of Ya'qūb's approach, fled away, whereas the people of the city took refuge in the fortress of Kohan-dez. Ya'qūb entered Balkh, and captured the city immediately. Many people were killed by his army, who proceeded to plunder the city. (Bahār 1938: 216-17; cf. Gold 1976: 172).

Here, Nāy Lāmān was a place for refuge or the last stronghold for the *rthyl*'s dynasty. From the *Tārīkh-e Gardīzī*, we know that the place had been used to hoard treasures in the 11th century.

Qal'a-ye Nāy is, however, most famous for being the place where the eminent Persian poet of the 11th century Mas'ūd Sa'd-e Salmān was imprisoned. The poet was born in Lahore, and spent some time at the Ghaznavids court, probably under the patronage of the Ghaznavid prince Sayf al-Dawla Mahmūd b. Ibrāhīm. At the age of about forty, however, he fell under suspicion and was imprisoned. He spent some ten years in the fortresses of Sū, Dahak and Nāy. The names of these fortresses are frequently recalled in his poems (see, for instance, Nūriyān 1986: 22, 479, 685-87). It was the Ghaznavid Sultān Zahīr al-Dawla Ibrāhīm b. Mas'ūd (1059-1099) who imprisoned Mas'ūd. But, according to the *Tabaqāt-e Nāsirī* written by Menhāj-e Sīrāj-e Jūzjānī in the 13th century (Habībī 1964, I: 238), Ibrāhīm himself had been confined in Qal'a-ye Nāy during the reign of his brother Farrukhzād (1053-1059)⁽⁵⁾ — circumstances which strongly suggest that the fortress was used as a prison or a place of confinement⁽⁶⁾.

The 12th-century Persian literary work *Chahār Maqāla* of Nizāmī 'Arūzī Samarqandī has a passage on Mas'ūd Sa'd-e Salmān:

(5) In the year 472 (1079), a slanderer said to Sultān Ibrāhīm that his son, Sayf al-Dawla Amīr Mahmūd had the intention of going to 'Irāq to the court of Malekshāh. The slanderer aroused the Sultān's jealousy [of Malekshāh]. He arranged for him (Sayf al-Dawla) to be arrested. Sayf al-Dawla was confined and sent to a fortress. His boon companions were also confined and sent to several forts. One of them was Mas'ūd Sa'd-e Salmān. He was sent to the Qal'a-ye Nāy in Wujīristān. (Qazwīnī 1910: 45).

The last passage is of special interest. Wujīristān or Wujīr appears in the *Tabaqāt-e Nāsirī* several times. In his edition of this work, Habībī (1964, I: 351, n. 5) identifies it with present-day Ajrestān in the Ūrūzgān province, west of the Dasht-e Nāwor, north of Jāghūrī (cf. also Adamec 1980: 28). Elsewhere, Habībī reconstructs this name as Wujwīr, taking it to have derived from Hujwīr, which he supposed to have been a suburb of Ghaznīn and the birthplace of 'Alī b. 'Othman al-Hujwīrī, the author of famous Sufi biography of the 11th century, *Kashf al-mahjūb* (Habībī 1985: 37, n.5; cf. Bosworth, 1965: 20, n. 3)⁽⁷⁾.

According to the *Tabaqāt-e Nāsirī* (Habībī 1964, I: 346), the most famous rulers and brothers of the Ghurid

dynasty, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muhammad and Mui'zz al-Dīn Muhammad, were confined in a certain fortress in Wujīristān⁽⁸⁾ by another famous ruler of the dynasty, 'Alā al-Dīn Jahānsūz, conqueror of Ghaznīn. Probably, the first fief given to 'Alā al-Dīn was also Wujīr (*ibid.*: 336)⁽⁹⁾. At the time of Qūtb al-Dīn Hasan b. 'Abbās, there was an uprising by the people of Tagāb in Wujīristān (*ibid.*: 333)⁽¹⁰⁾.

Tagāb might correspond to the present village in the upper Helmand valley, in the southernmost part of the Bāmiyān province where the borders of Wardak, Ghaznī and Ūrūzgān Provinces meet. According to the *Kartī Afghanistana*⁽¹¹⁾, the village lies approximately lat. 33° 54" N and long. 66° 58" E. Therefore, Wujīristān could have been a district spreading from Tagāb to Nāy at least, and might even have more or less covered the mountain regions west of Kābul and Ghaznī or extended to the Wardak, Ghaznī and Ūrūzgān provinces.

The Wujīristān of the Ghurid period may be related to the mysterious Fulishisatangna of Xuanzang's *Da Tang xiyu ji* and the *Life* (*Da Tang Da Ciensi Sanzang fashi zhuan*). Regarding the meaning and origin of the name of this place, various scholars such as Julien (1853: 378), Wilson (1841: 176), Cunningham (1871: 29) and Beal (1884, II: 285) have expressed different opinions. It is relatively clear, however, that its location lies between Caojuzha/Zābulistān and Kāpīśī. The *Da Tang Da Ciensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* (vol. 5) tells us:

Again, going north-west [from Varanu], he (Xuanzang) arrived at Abojian, then going north-west arrived at Caojuzha. Again going to north 500 *li*, he reached Fulishisatangna. [...] From this place, going east, he went out to the frontiers of Kāpīśī.

The *Da Tang xiyu ji* [vol. 12] says:

Fu-li-shi-sa-tang-na is about 2,000 *li* from east to west and 1,000 *li* from north to south. The capital is called Hu-bi-na, and is 20 *li* round. As regards the soil and manners of the people, these are the same as in Caojuzha; the language, however, is different. The climate is icy cold; the men are naturally fierce and impetuous. The king is a Turk. They have profound faith for the three precious objects of worship; he esteems learning and honours virtue. Going to the north-east

(5) Further evidence from a 13th-century work, the *Ādāb al-harb wa al-shujā'a* by Fakhr-e Modabber, also confirms this confinement, recording that Sharīf Abī al-Faraj, who was the great grandfather of Fakhr-e Modabber and foster brother of Sultān Ibrāhīm, had been confined in the fortress. Cf. Khānsārī (1967: 105).

(6) Muhammad Awfī's *Jawāmi' al-hikāyāt wa lawāmi' al-riwāyāt*, a large collection of 13th-century anecdotes, offers another instance of the usage of Qal'a-ye Nāy as a prison. Cf. A.B. Musaffā & M. Musaffā (1975, II: 384).

(7) Bosworth also suggests the possible connection between this Wujīristān and present-day Waziristān.

(8) The Calcutta edition of the same work reads *whyrstan* (Lees 1864: 59).

(9) *wjyh* in the Ms., amended by Habībī.

(10) *whyrstan* in Lees (1864: 45).

(11) The map, made by the General Staff Office of the former Soviet Army, is on a 1:200,000 scale.

from this kingdom, traversing mountains and crossing rivers, and passing several tens of little towns situated on the frontier of Kāpisi, we come to a great mountain pass called Po-luo-xi-na, which forms part of the great snowy mountains. This mountain pass is very high; the precipices are wild and dangerous; the path along the valley is tortuous, and the caverns and hollows wind and intertwine together. At one time the traveler enters a deep valley, at another he mounts a high peak. The route is frozen even in full summer. By cutting steps up the ice the traveler passes on, and after three days he comes to the highest point of the pass. There the icy cold wind intensely blows with fury; the piled snow fills the valleys. Travellers pushing their way through, cannot find a place to pause. Even though they fly up as high as possible, falcons cannot fly over the peak, but climb afoot across the height and then fly downwards. Looking at the mountains round, they seem as little hillocks. This is one of the highest peaks of all Jambudvīpa. No trees are seen upon it, but only a mass of rocks, crowded one by the side of the other, like a thick forest. Going on for three days more, we descend the pass and come to An-da-luo-fu. (Cf. Beal 1884, II: 285).

On the basis of these descriptions, Kuwayama (1999: 57) suggests that the area could extend from Wardak in the southwest to the Lataband pass in the east, encompassing Kābul. Consequently, it could also encompass or partly overlap with the area of Wujīristān. It is even possible that that Fulishisatangna < *Wulijistān had changed to Wujīristān /Wujīristān (or Wujuristān according to Habībī) with a later metathesis, unless the former is a simple misspelling of the latter. If this is indeed the case, then a slight amendment to Kuwayama's supposition is necessary. As we know, even after the political centre of the Kāpisi kingdom had moved to Kābul in the latter half of the 7th century, the Chinese sources continued to call the region by the same name, i.e. Jibin (cf. Kuwayama 1992: 40, 119). It seems natural to consider Kābul to have been included not in Fulishisatangna but in Kāpisi. As for the Wujiristān of the Islamic sources, clearly it does not include Kābul.

According to Verardi (1977: 21; see also the present volume, pp. 19-22), the rock-cut monasteries of Nāy Qal'a have several features in common with those at Bāmiyān. As pointed out above, the road from Fulishisatangna led to the border with Kāpisi, then on to Poluoxina, identified with the Khawak pass (Beal 1884, II: 286, n. 10); thus the route would partly correspond to the Panjshīr Valley. But to the west of the latter lies the valley of the Ghorband, which leads to Bāmiyān via the Shibar Pass. There can be no absolute certainty here, but the information from the Chinese sources gives the impression that there was a route leading to Bāmiyān through Fulishisatangna, bypassing Kābul. The above-mentioned passage in the *Tārīkh-e Sīstān* says that, after conquering Nāy Lāmān, Ya'qūb went to Balkh by way of Bāmiyān, which is also interesting in this respect^(*).

The fact that the fortress of Nāy Qal'a was a hiding place for young princes and hoarding up treasures, the last stronghold of defence and a prison for criminals or political offenders, indicates that it was fairly isolated and not easy to gain access to: such was the situation in the latter half of the 9th century according to the

Tārīkh-e Sīstān. This means that the route from Qarabāgh to the high valley of the Arghandāb was not a trade or travel route at the time. As for the pre-Saffarid period, Foucher's hypothesis on the route followed by Xuanzang (cf. Verardi 1977: 21) should be reconsidered, and especially the *Jagūḍa/Jāghūrī question. On the basis of the description in the *Da Tang xiyu ji* quoted above, Foucher (1942-47, II: 230-34) supposed that at the time of Xuanzang the main route from Qandahār to Kāpisi passed through the Arghandāb valley, and then proceeded through the Wardak mountains⁽¹⁰⁾. Bombaci (1957: 254) questioned this hypothesis re-examining Foucher's sources, and Fussman (1974: 254) also doubted his reconstruction, referring to the fact that the route through the Dasht-e Nāwor is usually blocked for about six months a year. The name *Jagūḍa has recently been examined by Y. Yoshida (Kuwayama 1992: 135-39), who concludes that Jagūḍa stands for *(d)zāul, and not Jāghūrī⁽¹¹⁾. Thus, we can say that at present Foucher's hypothesis is not supported by recent research work.

What, then, was the reason for the Buddhist caves to be hewn out in that very place? This is not an easy question to answer, but there is an interesting clue. If we assume that the area was included in Xuanzang's Fulishisatangna, we can further argue that it was ruled by a Turkish chief in the first half of the 7th century. In fact, Turks are thought to have become the rulers of Kābul in the second half of the century (Kuwayama 1999: 57), identified more specifically by Petech (1988: 193) and Rehman (1988: 40-45) as the Khalaj, taken to be one of the Turkish tribes. In the two recently discovered Bactrian documents from northern Afghanistan dating to the latter half of the 7th century and the beginning of the 8th century respectively, the word *khalas* appears (Sims-Williams 2000: 82, 98). According to Sims-Williams, these documents contain the earliest references to the Khalaj (1997: 20). He supposes that a considerable part of them are from the royal archives of the kings of Rob (present Rūy), as they contain many place names of the Kholm valley including Samangān, Rob, Kah and Madr (*ibid.*: 14, 17). This evidence indicates the presence of Khalaj Turks at the northern edge of the Hindukush in the 7th-8th centuries. If we follow Petech and Rehman, it is not impossible to connect them to the Turks of the same tribe settled in southern Hindukush in the same period, i.e. Turks of Fulishisatangna.

The original home of the Khalaj Turks is assumed to have been somewhere in Central Asia. They might have moved from east to west and north to south, eventually arriving in the area around Bost and Zamīn Dāwar (Minorsky 1940: 430-31). If the Khalaj who settled in

(*) The question is discussed above in this volume, p. 16.

(10) Foucher (1942-47) also argued that Xuanzang's Fulishisatangna may correspond to the Garjistān of the Islamic sources.

(11) See pp. 94-96 in this volume.

northern Hindukush moved south, presumably to Fulishisatangna, across the mountains, they may have followed the route connecting the area to which Qal'a-ye Nāy belonged with Bāmiyān, which was an important station for crossing the Hindukush.

A branch of these Khalaj established their rule in Kābul and Zābulistān in the latter half of the 7th century and continued to rule there until the 9th century. The reason for patronage of the Buddhist monasteries might ultimately be sought in this fact. Xuanzang relates that the chief of Fulishisatangna had faith in the Three Precious Objects, and Huichao, a Korean monk who travelled in this region at the beginning of the 8th century, also records that the people of Kābul and the king of Zābulistān were of the Buddhist persuasion (Kuwayama 1992: 40)⁽¹²⁾. We can take the Bactrian inscriptions from Jaghatū attributable to the Turkish period, one of which reports the *triratna* formula (Humbach 1967), as further circumstantial evidence.

Other Bactrian inscriptions are known from Ūrūzgān,

also attributed to the Turks (Humbach 1966, I: 103-4)⁽¹³⁾. Although not Buddhist in content, they suggest a connection between the mountain regions west of Kābul and Ghaznī and the Turkish rule. Indeed, as we know, following the Helmand river from Ūrūzgān it is possible to reach Bost and Zamīn Dāwar, which the Arab geographers report to have been the residence of the Khalaj people in the 10th century (de Goeje 1967: 245; Minorsky 1982: 111-12).

(12) As is well known, the religions of these regions present a rather complicated picture. Buddhism and Brahmanism coexisted along with Zoroastrianism. See Kuwayama 1978, Humbach 1996, and above in this volume, pp. 100-2.

(13) Bivar, who discovered these inscriptions, gives a different reading, and attributes them to the Hephthalite kings of Zābulistān. Cf. Bivar 1954.

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Abbreviations

AION = *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli*. Napoli.
 ASKUA = Archaeological Survey of Kyoto University in Afghanistan. Kyoto.
 BEFEO = *Bullettin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*. Paris.
 BSOAS = *Bullettin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*. London.
 CRAI = *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*. Paris.
 EW = *East and West*. Roma.
 RepMem = Reports and Memoirs of the Istituto Italiano per il Medio e l'Estremo Oriente (now Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente). Rome.
 JA = *Journal Asiatique*. Paris.
 JAJAS = Japan-Afghanistan Joint Archaeological Survey. Kyoto.
 JRAS = *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. London.
 MDFAFA = *Mémoires de la Délégation Archéologiques Française en Afghanistan*. Paris (if not differently specified).
 SAA = *Proceedings of the Conference of South Asian Archaeology*.
 SRAA = *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*. Kamakura.
 Zinbun = *Zinbun. Annals of the Institute for Research in Humanities*. Kyoto.

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a. The Shāhkōh seen from Nāy Qal'a. (Photo G. De Marco).



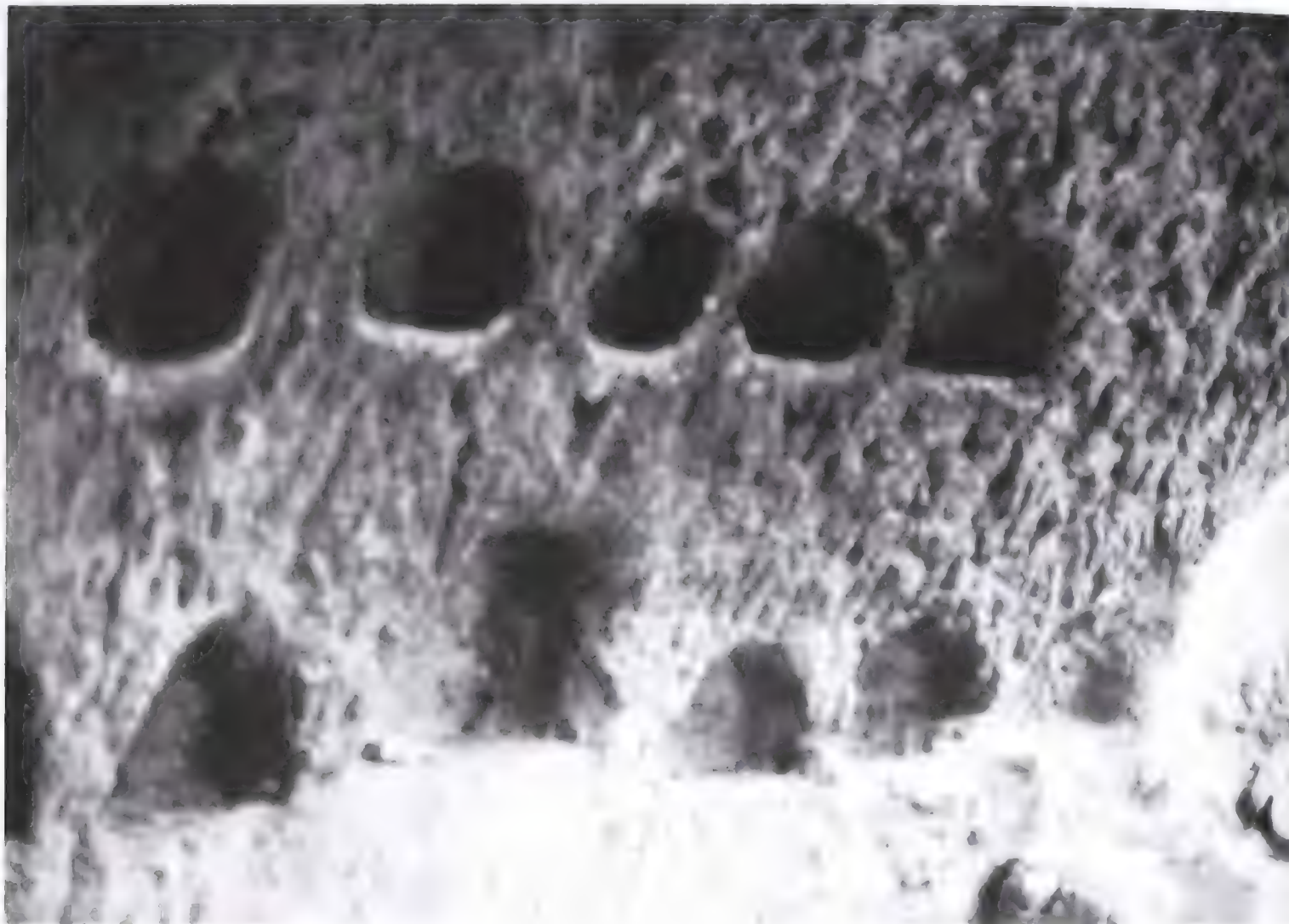
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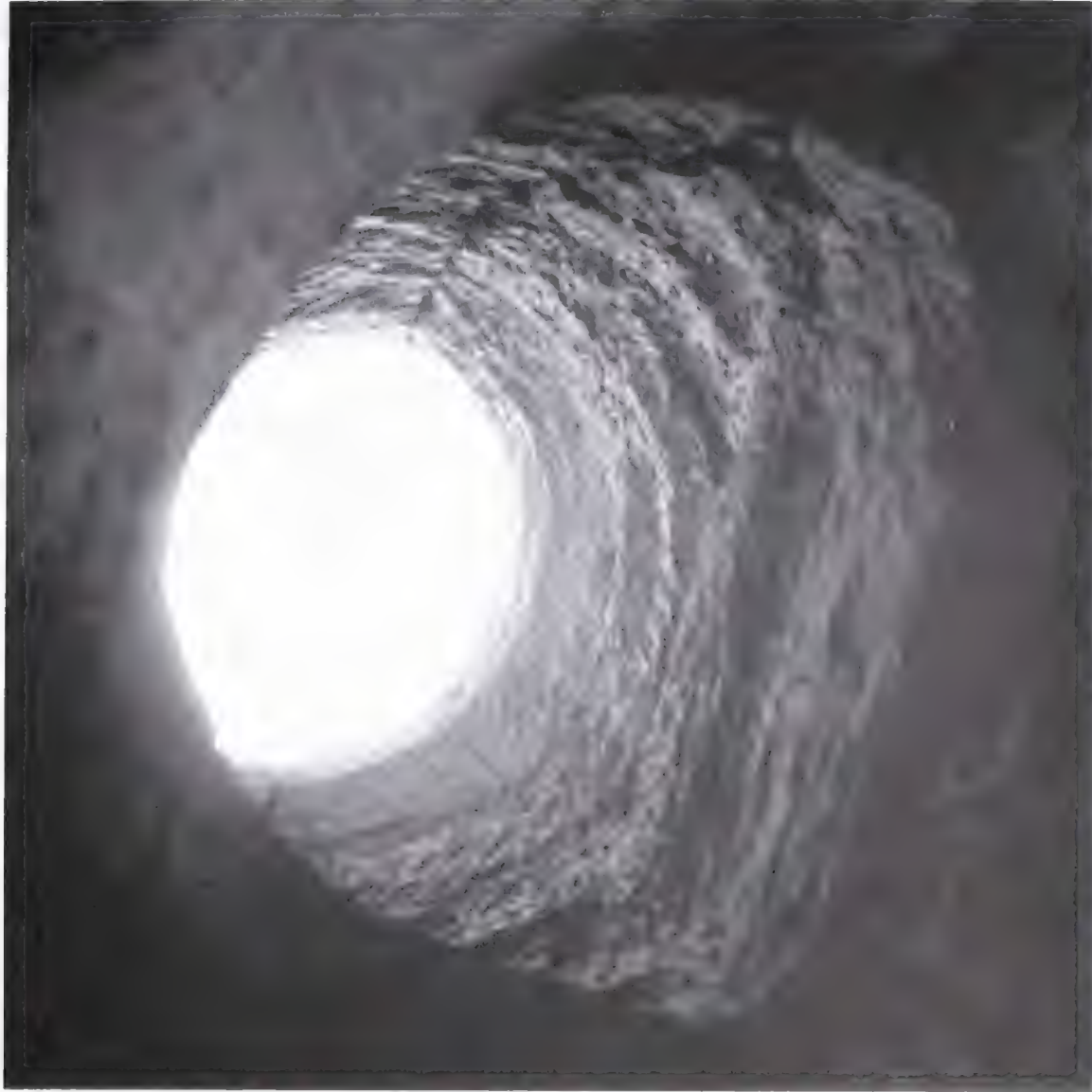
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a. Nāy Qal'a. Corridor on back side of massif. (Photo M. Taddei).



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a. Homāy Qal'ā. Corridor 16. (Photo G. Verardi).



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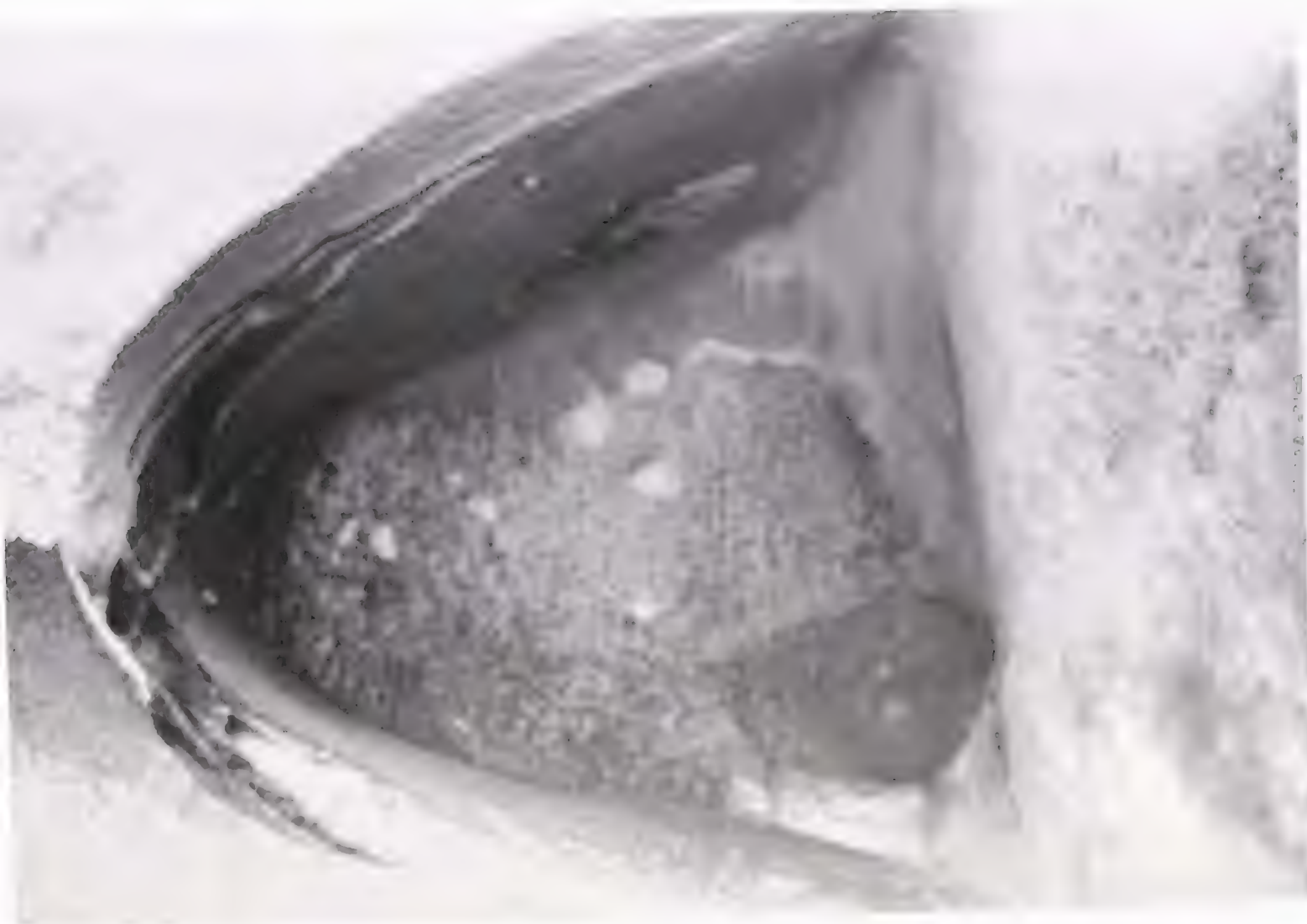
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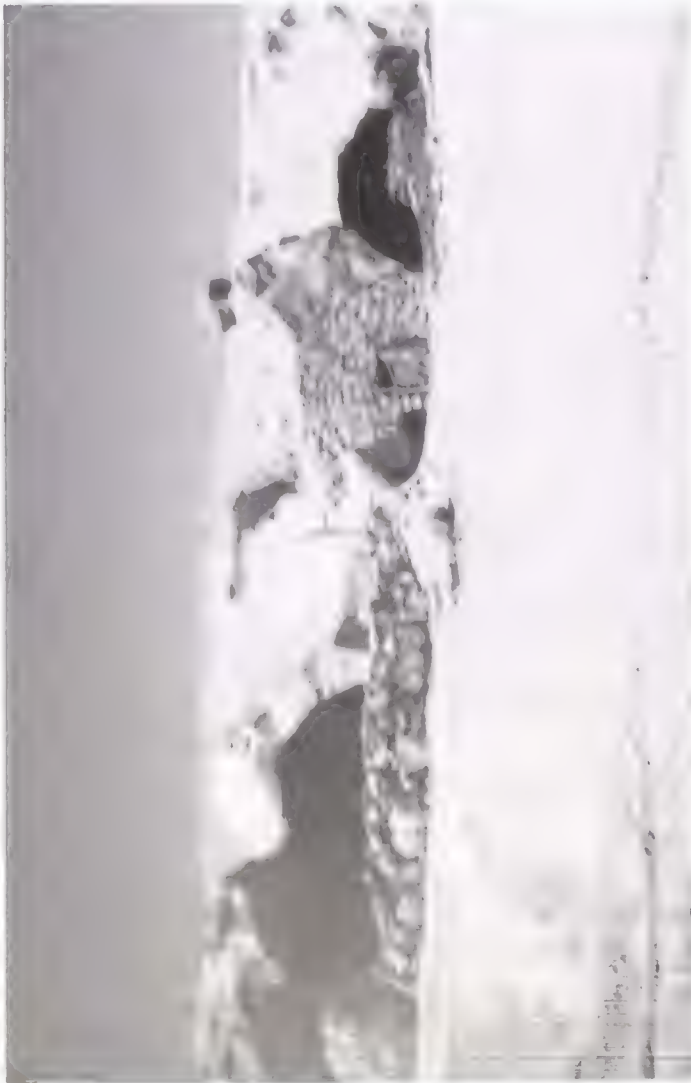
a. Tapa Sanawbar seen from Shāh Khwāja. (Photo G. Verardi).



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b. Tapa Sanawbar. Cave 1, detail of right sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Tapa Sanawbar. Cave 2. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Sanawbar. Cave 2. back wall. (Photo U. Scerrato).



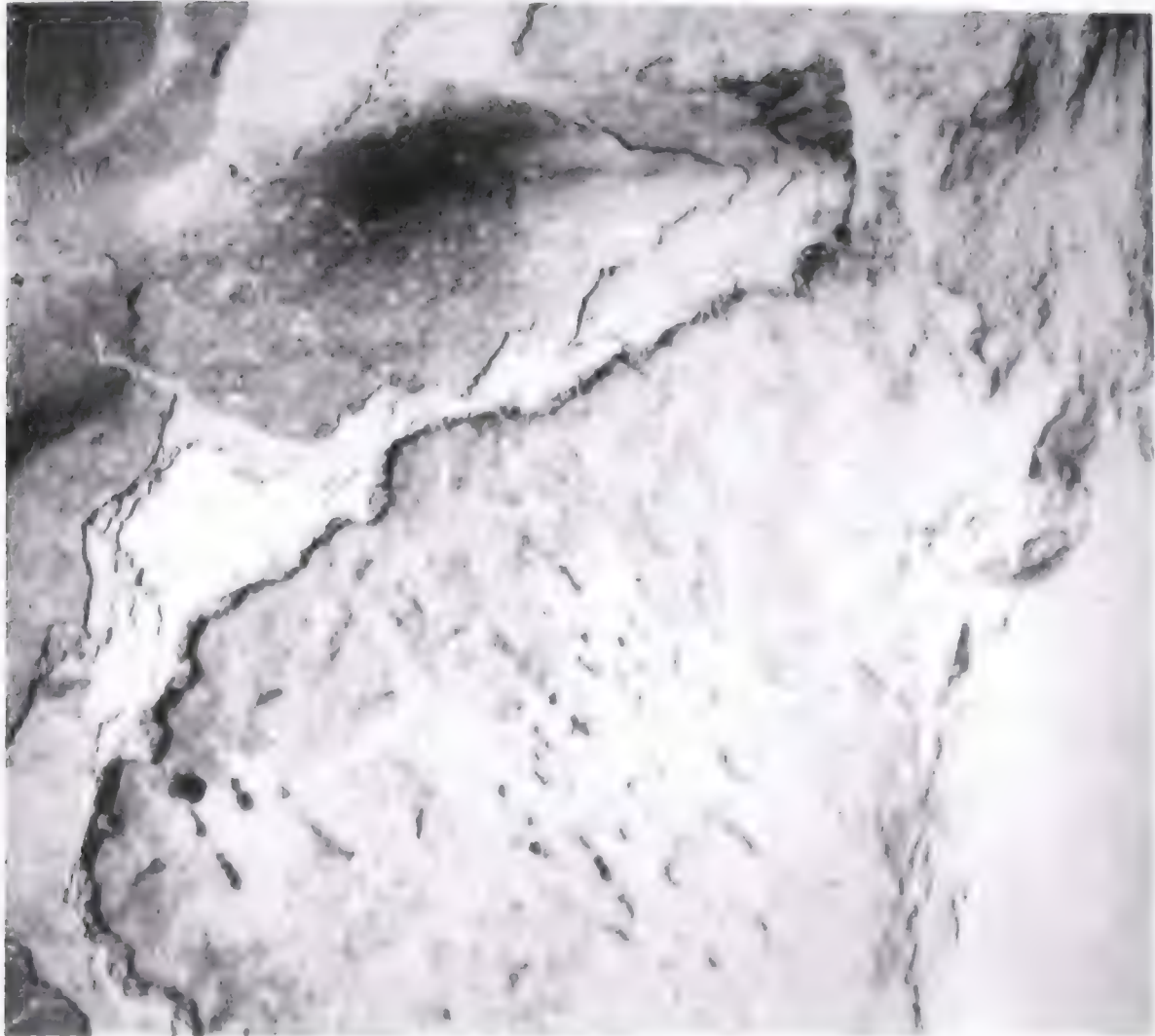
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b. Tapa Sanawbar, Cave 2, detail of entablature. (Photo G. Verardi)



a. Tapa Sanawbar. Cave 2. niche on back wall. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Sanawbar. Cave 2. detail of niche on back wall. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Tapa Sanawbar. Cave 3. (Photo G. Verardi).



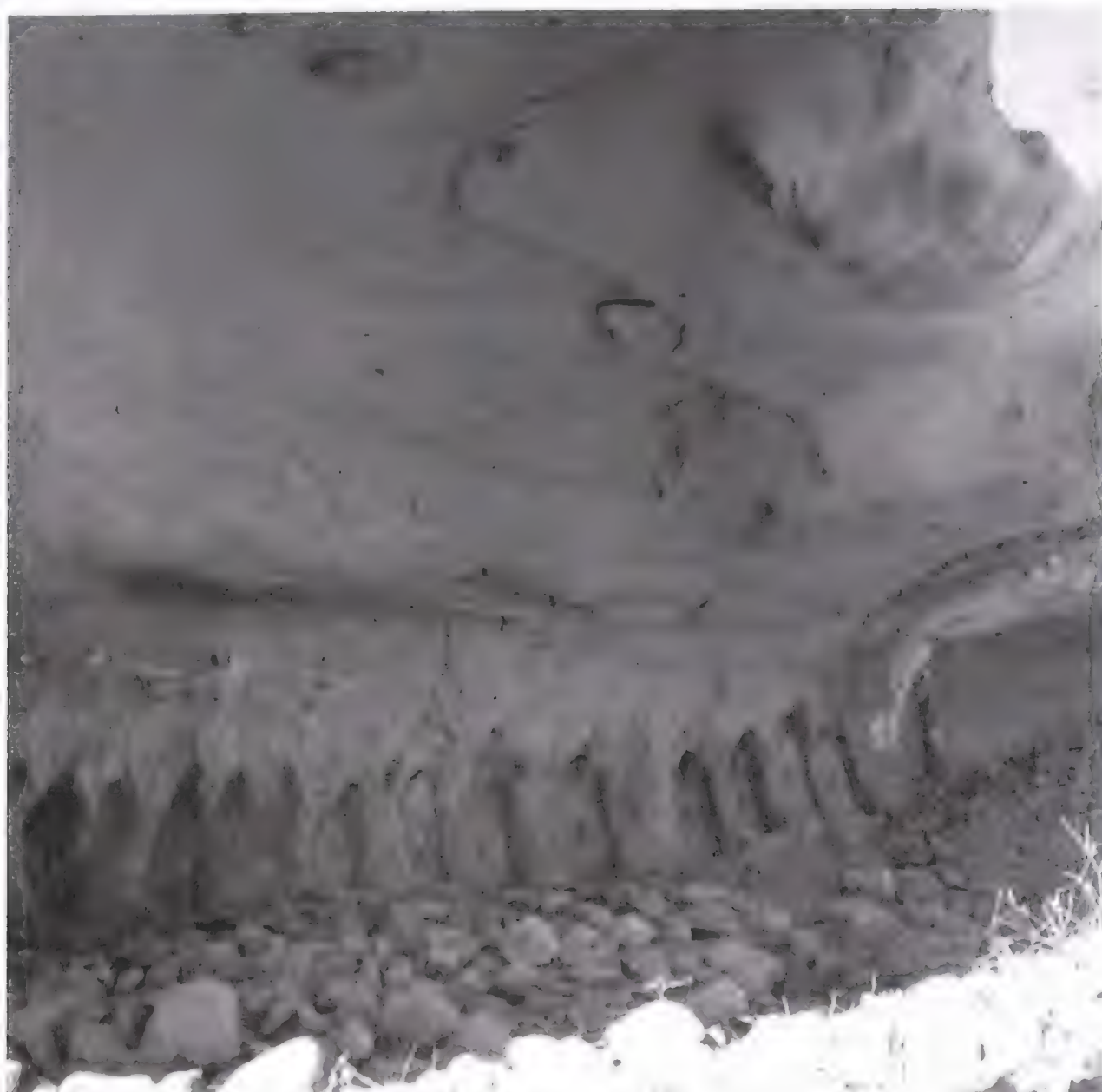
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a. Shāh Khwāja. General view (Photo G. Verardi).



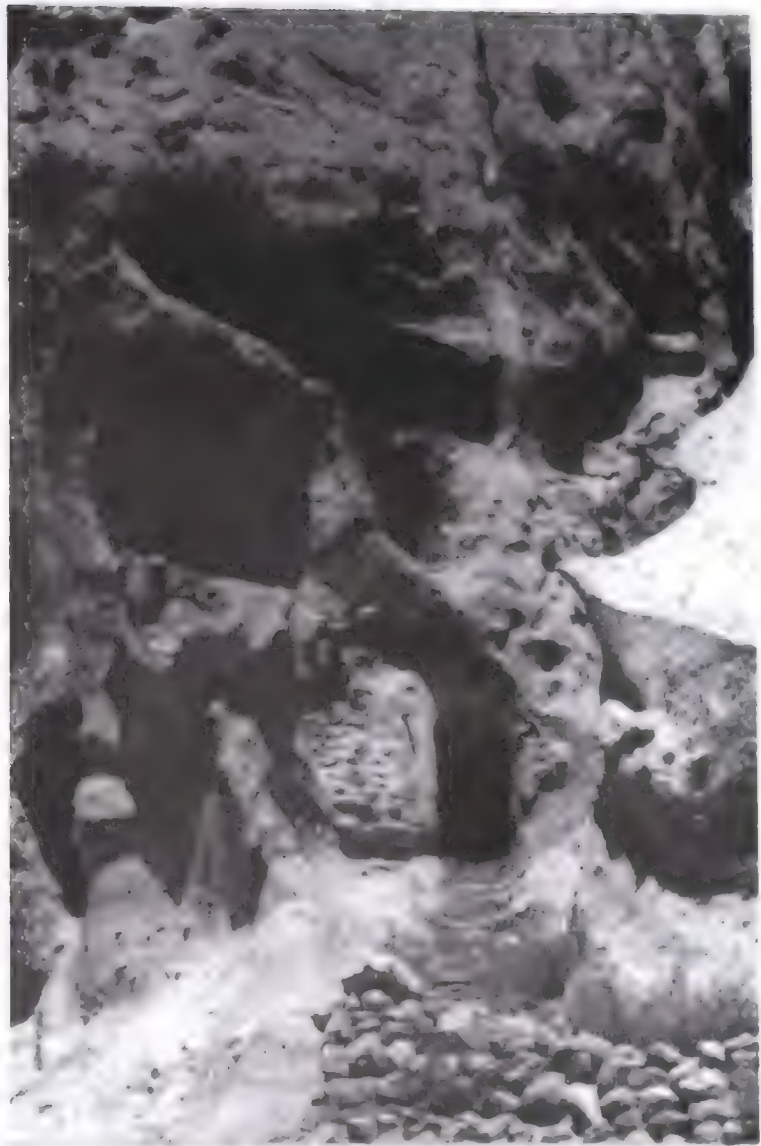
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a. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka. Cave 2. Photo U. Scerrato.



b. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka. Cave 3 (above) and Cave 4 (below). Photo U. Scerrato



a. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka. Cave 4. (Photo U. Scerrato)



b. Ghār-e Shākī Nōka. Cave 4. (Photo U. Scerrato)



a. On the road from Ghār-e Shaki Nōka to Gawargīn. (Photo G. Verardi).



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a. Gawargin. View from afar. (Photo G. Verardi)





a. Gawargīn. General view of falaise.



b. Gawargīn. Group A. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Gawargĭn. Caves 1 and 3. (Photo U. Scerrato).



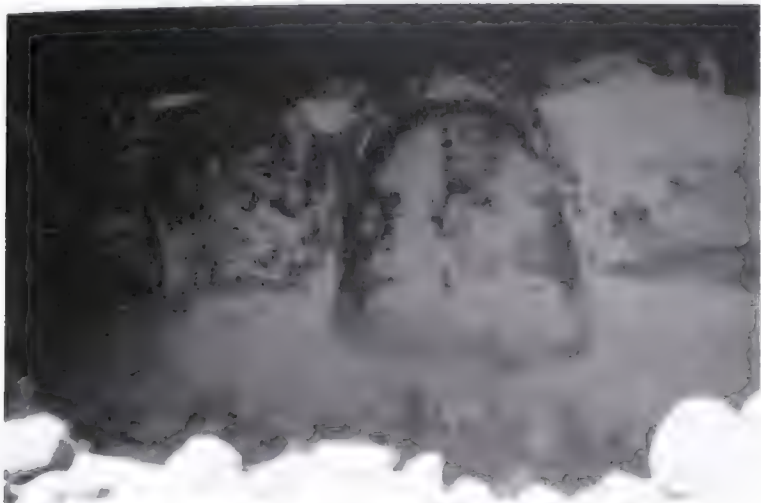
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b. Gawargĭn. Corridor 1c from Cave 1a. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Gawargin. Cave 3, back wall. (Photo G. De Marco).



b. Gawargin. Cave 3, central niche. (Photo G. Verardi).



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a. Gawargin. Caves 4 (above) and 5 (below) in Group B.
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b. Gawargin. Cave 4. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Gawargĭn. Cave 4, right sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Gawargĭn. Cave 5. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Kōh-e Ēl. General view. (Photo U. Scerrato).



b. Kōh-e Ēl. Cave Groups A and B. (Photo G. Verardi).



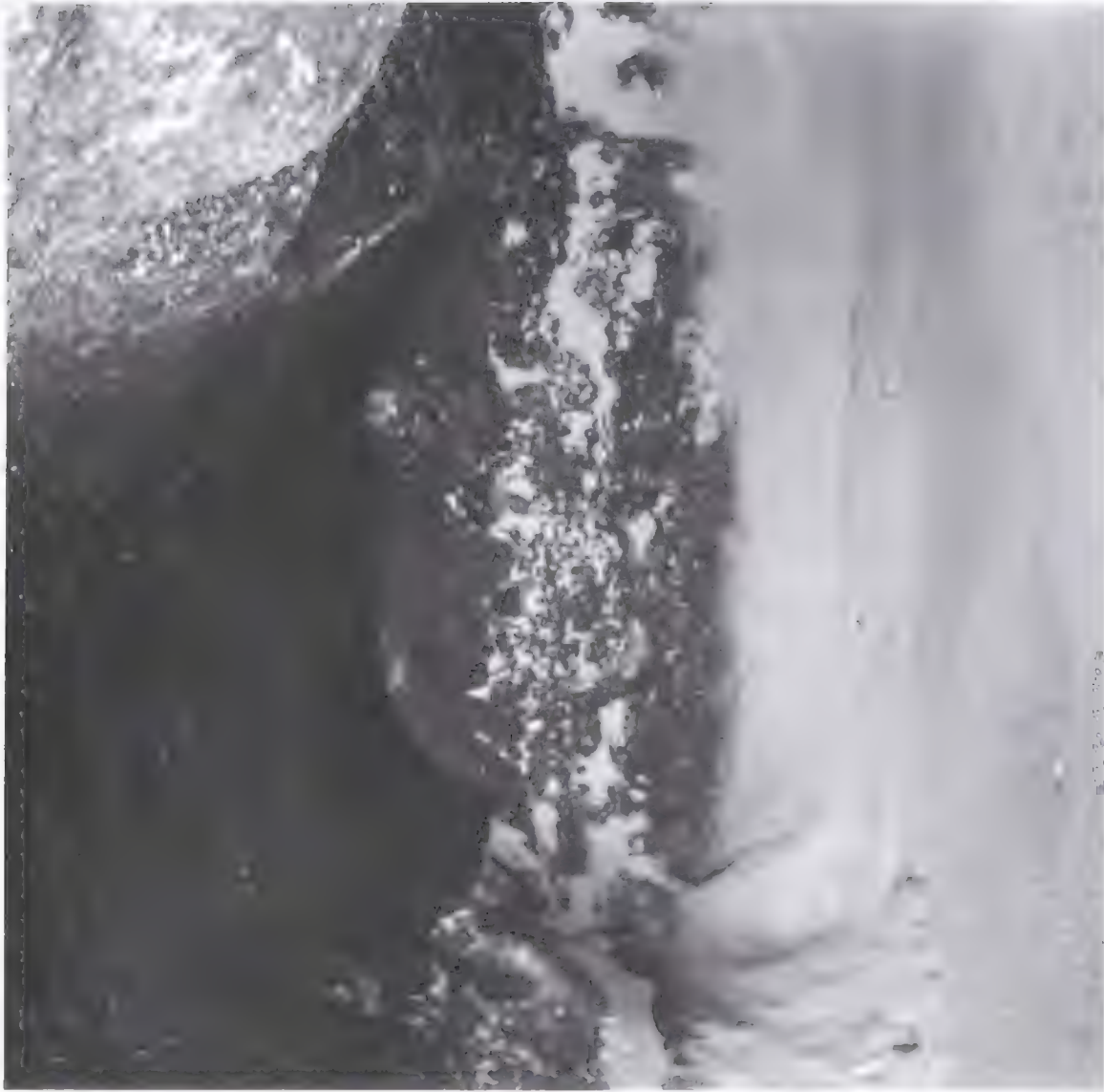
a. Kōh-e Ēl. Detail of Group A. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Kōh-e Ēl. (Photo G. Verardi).



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a, b. Kōh-e Ēl. Cave 3, back wall. (Photos G. Verardi).





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b. Kōh-e Ēl. Group C. (Photo U. Scerrato).



a. Kōh-e Ēl. Cave 10 in Group C. (Photo U. Scerrato).



b. Kōh-e Ēl. (Photo U. Scerrato).



a, b. Ghār-e Shāh, general view. (Photos G. Verardi).



c. Group of caves at Ghār-e Shāh. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Ghār-e Shah Cave 1 (Photo G. Verardi).





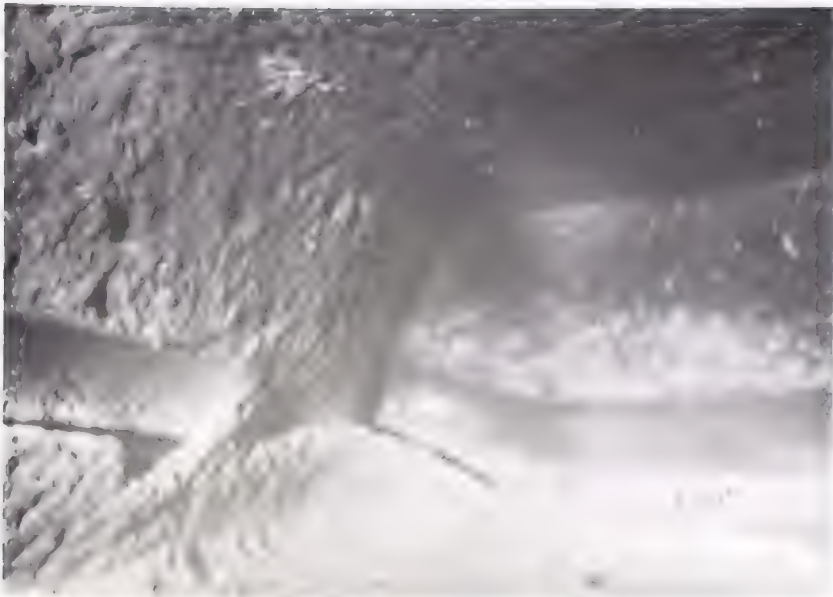
a. Ghār-e Shāh. Cave 1, back wall. (Photo U. Scerrato).



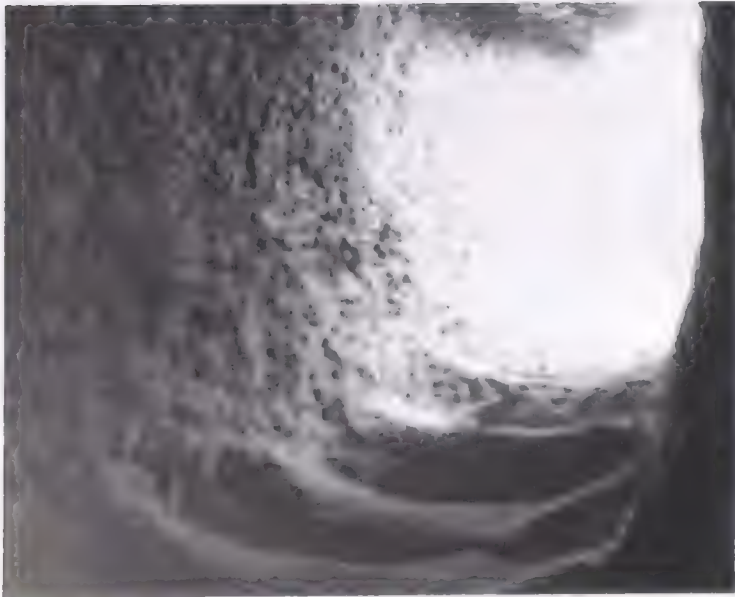
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b. Ghār-e Shāh. Door of Cave 6 from Cave 7. (Photo G. De Marco).



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a. Sangdara. General view. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Sangdara. View of caves, with Cave 1 at the centre. (Photo G. Verardi).



Sangdara Cave 1 (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Sangdara. Entrance to Cave 2. (Photo G. Verardi).



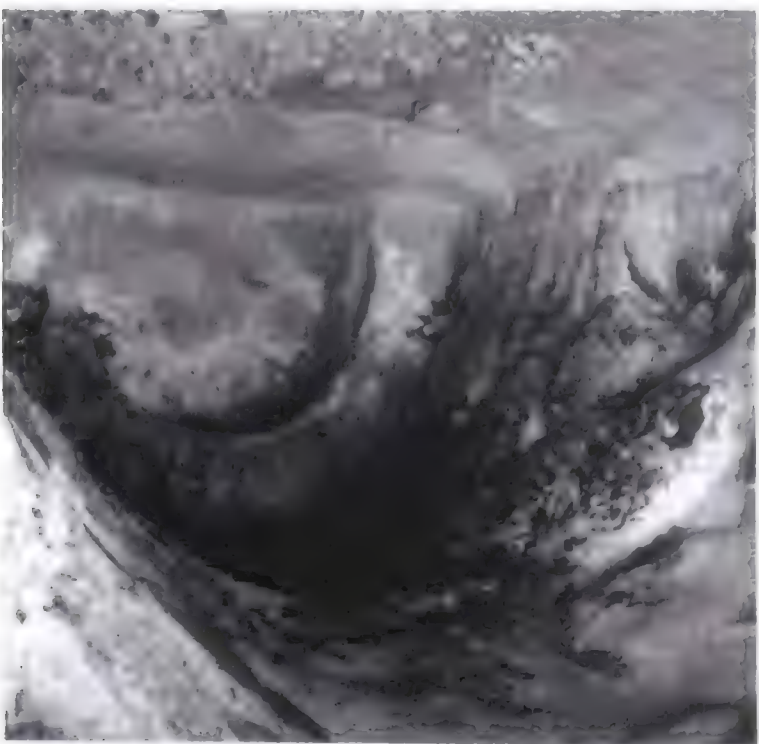
b. Sangdara. Cave 2, detail of niche on right sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi).



c. Sangdara. Cave 2, corner between back wall and right sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Sangdara, Cave 2, central niche. (Photo G. Verardi).



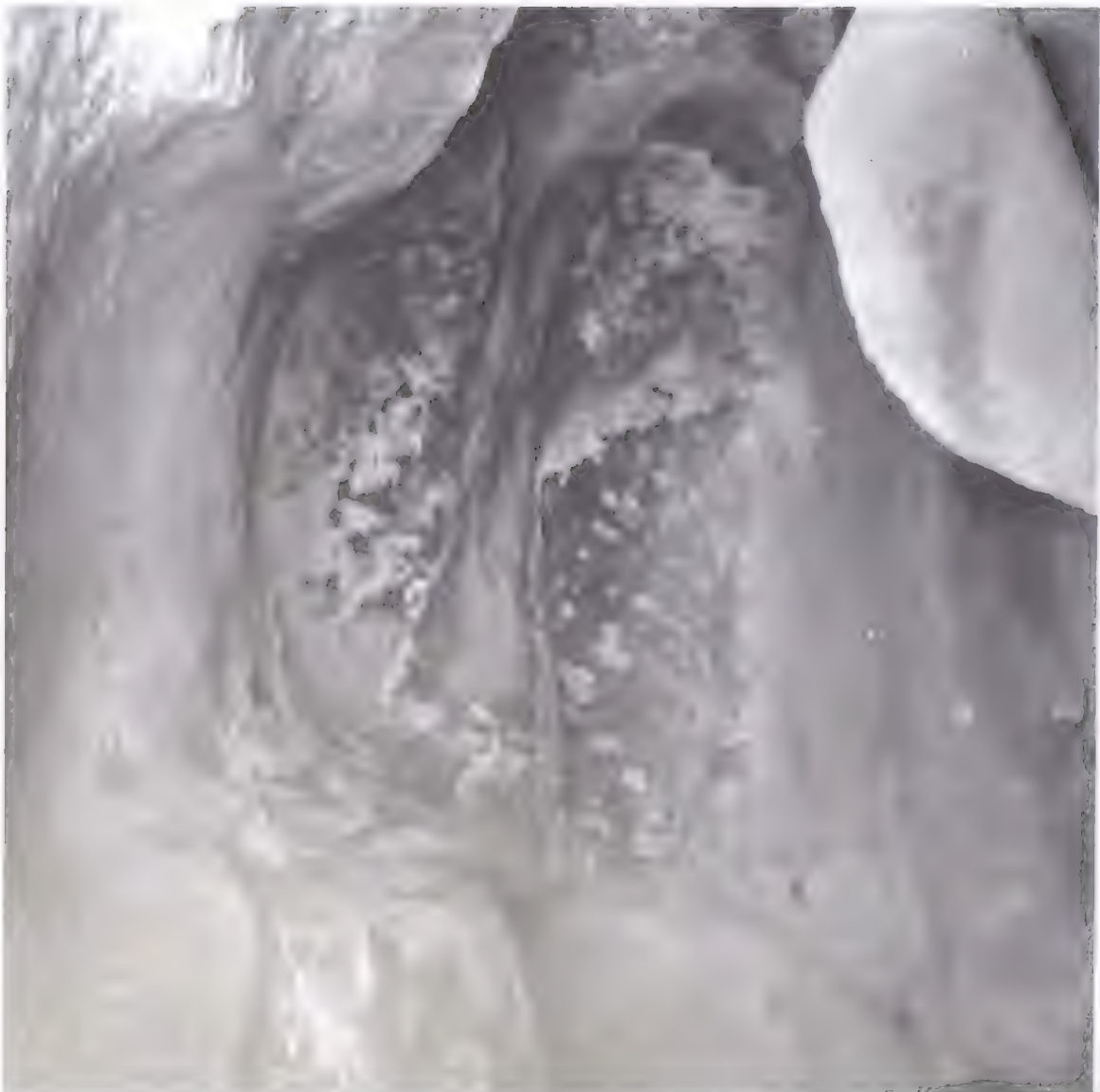
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SANGDARA, Cave 2, interior view. (Photo G. Verardi).



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a. Sangdara. Cave 3, back wall. (Photo G. Verardi).



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a. The plain of Sar-e Āb in the Nāwa-ye Khodaydād with Tapa Hesār and Tapa Hakrīz at the centre and the Kōh-e Khūd in the background. (Photo G. Verardi).



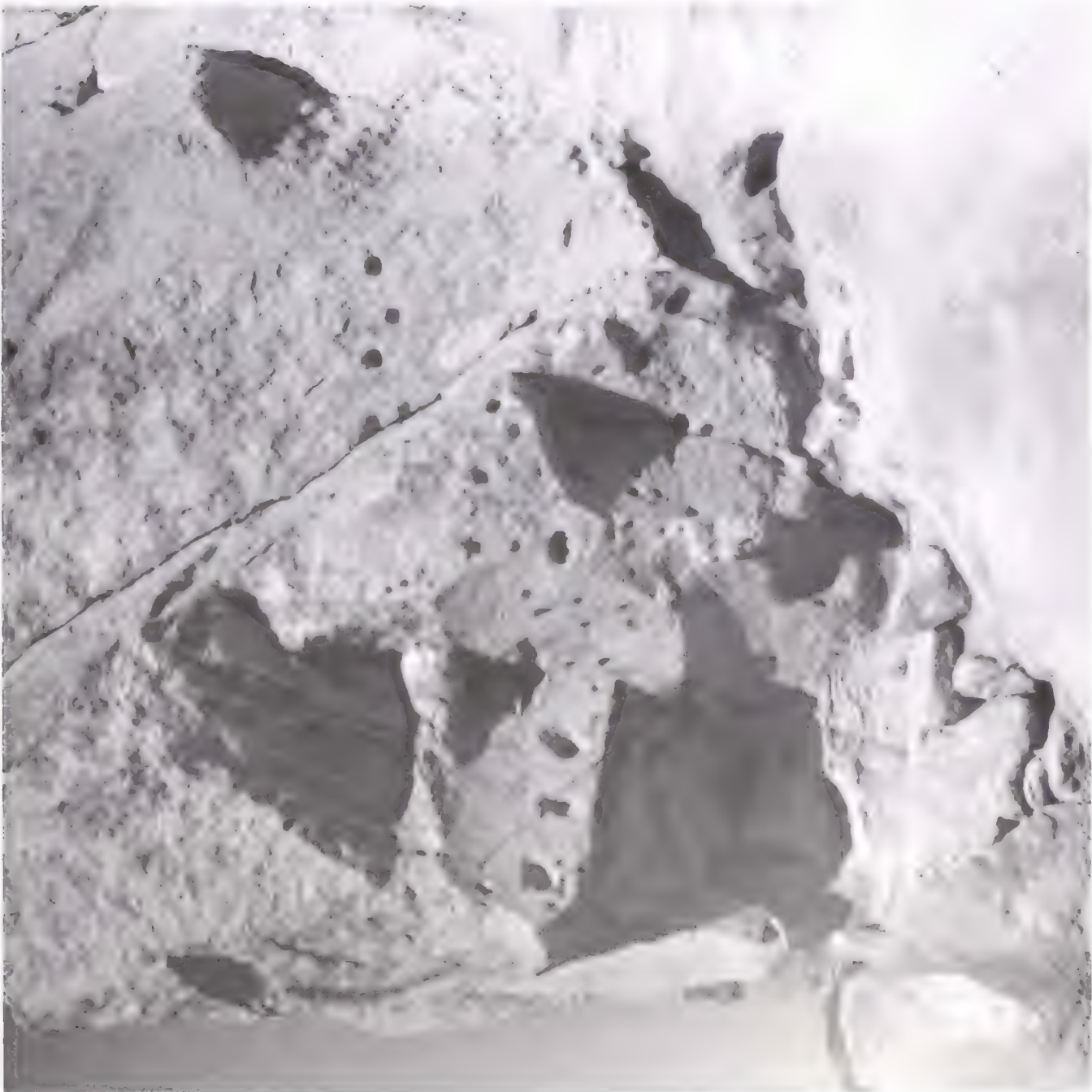
b. Tapa Hesār. General view. (Photo G. Verardi).



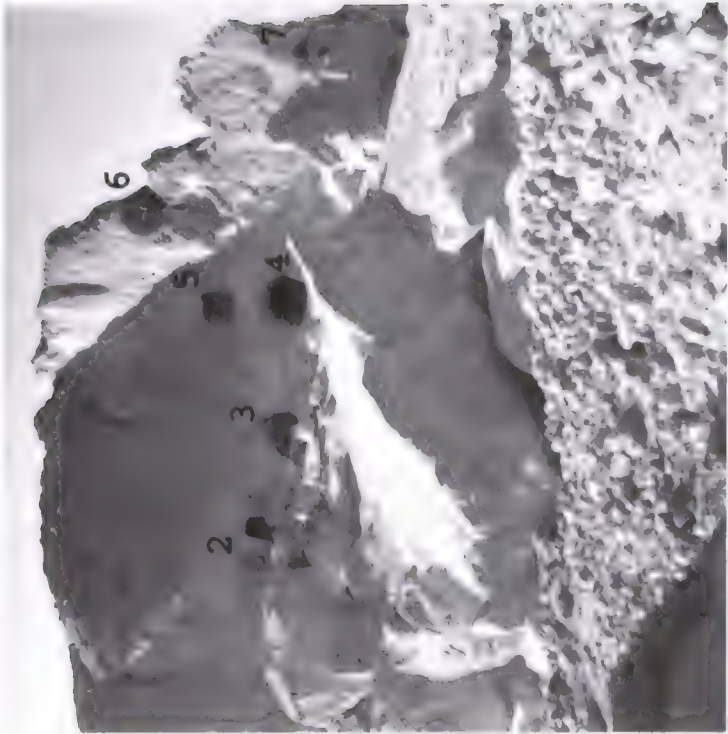
a. Tapa Hesār. Northern part of massif seen from Bālā Khāna. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. View of Tapa Hesār from the northeast. (Photo G. Verardi)



a. Tapa Hesār. Cave 1. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Hesār. Caves 2-7. (Photo G. Verardi).



c. Tapa Hesār. Cave 2. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Tapa Hesār. Cave 7. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Hesār. Cave 7, close-up view. (Photo G. Verardi)



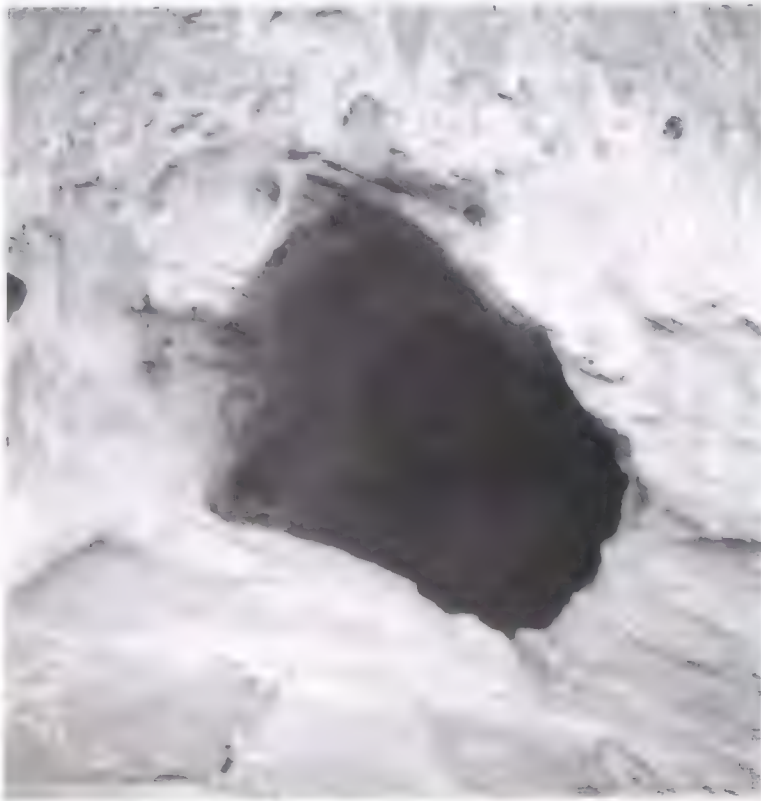
a. Tapa Hesār. Back side of massif: Caves 8-8c (left) and Caves 9-10 (centre). (Photo G. Verardi).



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a. Tapa Hesār. Back side of massif: Caves 9-10. (Photo G. Verardi).



b, c. Tapa Hesār. Back side of massif: Cave 11. (Photos G. Verardi).



a. Bālā Khāna. General view. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Bālā Khāna. Detail of caves group. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Massif of Kōh-e Nūzul. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Kōh-e Nūzul. Close-up view. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. The Kōh-e Khud seen from Sangdara. Bayak massif on the fore to the right. (Photo G. Verardi)



b. The massif of Bayak, with the Kōh-e Khud in the background. (Photo G. Verardi)



a. Bayak. General view. (Photo G. De Marco)



b. Bayak. Close-up view of the cliffs. (Photo G. De Marco)





a. Bayak. Passage to back side of massif (bottom right). (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Bayak. Passage to back side of massif. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Lālā Khēl. General view. (Photo G. Verardi).





a. Lālā Khēl. Central niche of a cave. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Lālā Khēl. Detail of a cave. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Caves 1-3. (Photo G. Marco).



b. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Cave 4. (Photo G. Marco).



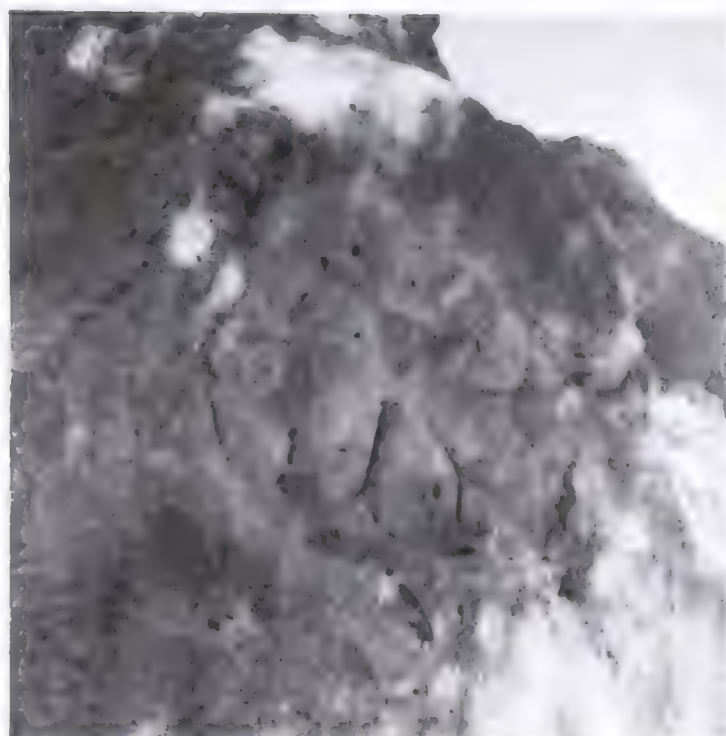
a. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Cave 1. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Cave 2, interior. (Photo G. Verardi).



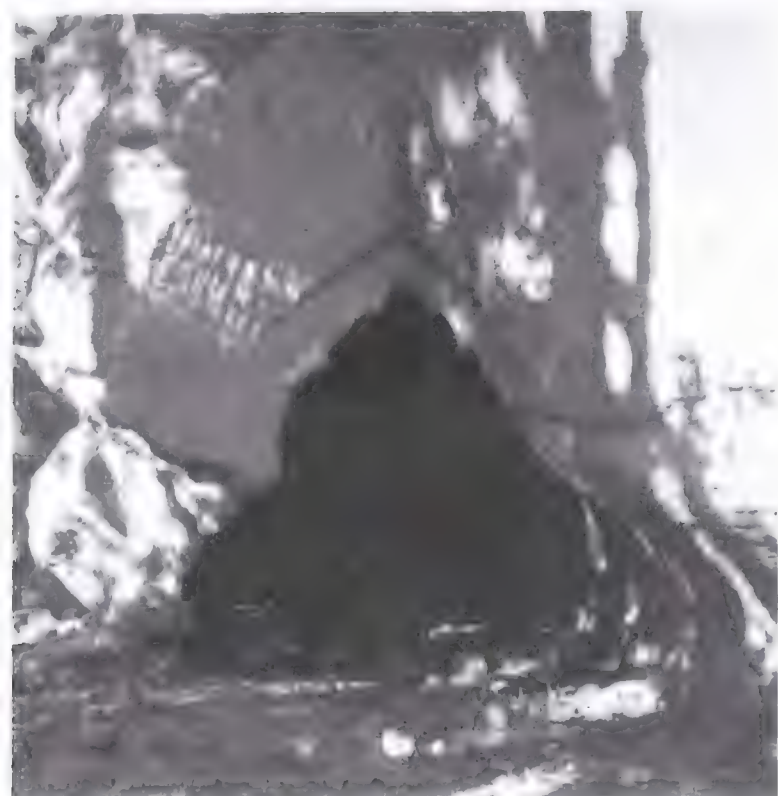
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a. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Cave 4, detail of niche reworked in the shape of a *mihrāb*. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Caves 5-6. (Photo G. Verardi).



c. Qaryā-ye Bābā Kamāl. Cave 5, interior. (Photo G. Verardi)



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Southern side of massif. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Zaytūn. Western side of massif. (Photo G. Verardi).



Tapa Zaytūn. Southern side of massif. (Photo U. Scerrato).

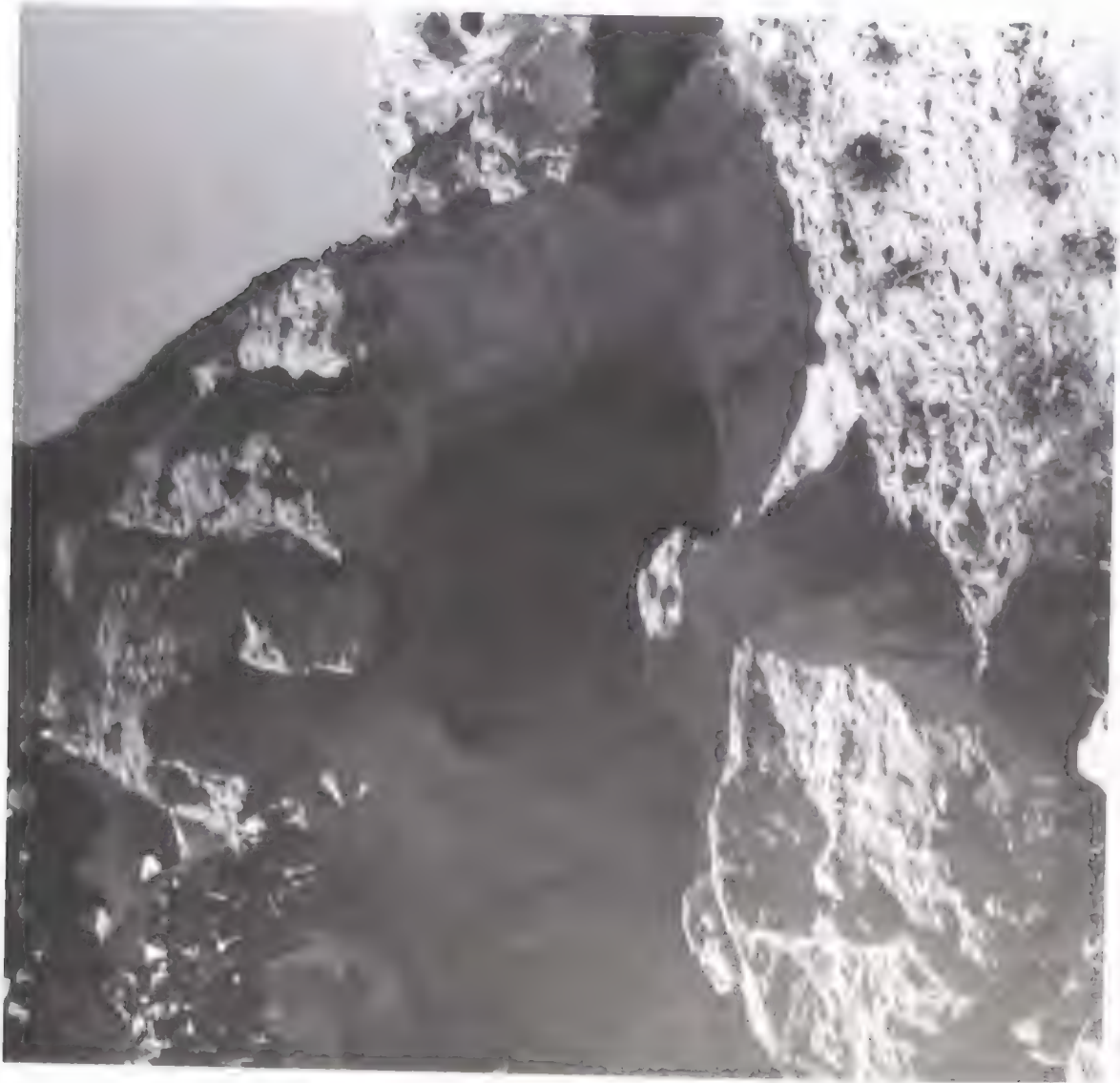


a. Tapa Zaytūn. Western side of massif, close-up view. (Photo U. Scerrato).





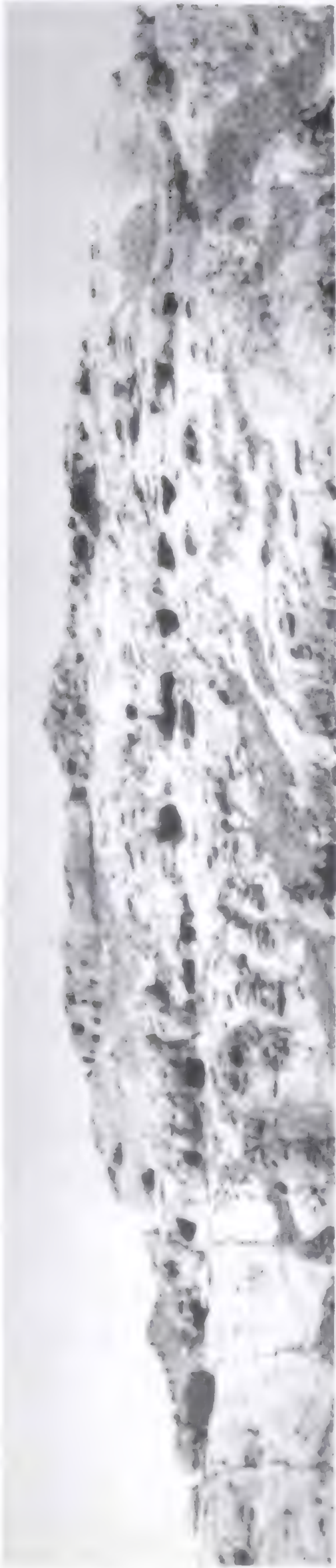
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a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 1. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 3. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Zaytūn. Caves on Third Terrace. (Photo U. Scerrato).



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 12. (Photo G. De Marco).



b. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 12, corner between back wall and right sidewall. (Photo G. De Marco, detail).



c. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 12, corner between back wall and right sidewall. (Photo G. De Marco)



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 15. (Photo U. Scerrato).





a. Tapa Zaytūn. Entrance to Cave 19. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Zaytūn. Entrance to Cave 20. (Photo G. Verardi)



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 21, cells a-c, j-l. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 21, cells c-e, i, k-l. (Photo G. Verardi).



c. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 21, cells b-e, h, l-o. (Photo G. Verardi).



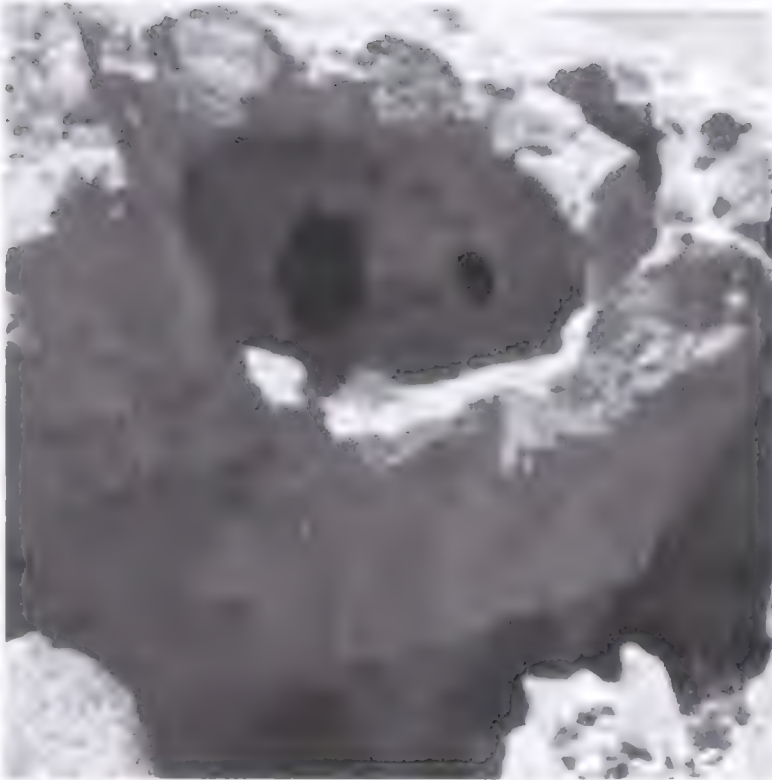
a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 22. (Photo U. Scerrato).



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 22. (Photo G. Verardi).



a Tapa Zaytūn. Fourth Terrace with Cave 23. (Photo G. Verardi).



b Tapa Zaytūn. Fourth Terrace with Cave 23a. (Photo U. Scerrato).



Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 23 from above. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 23, back wall and detail of right sidewall. (Photo U. Scerrato).





a Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 23, right sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi)



b Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 23, detail of niches and indentation on right sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi)



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Fifth Terrace with Caves 24 (left) and 25 (right). (Photo U. Scerrato).



b. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 24. (Photo U. Scerrato).



c. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 24, interior. (Photo U. Scerrato).



a. Tapa Zaytūn. Cave 25. Central niche and niche on right sidewall. (Photo U. Scerrato).





a. Shotor Ghār. Southern wall of caves group. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Shotor Ghār. Western part of caves group. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Shotor Ghār. Cave 1. Door on right sidewall leading to Cave 1a. (Photo G. Verardi).



b. Shotor Ghār. Cave 1. Corner between back wall and right sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi).



c. Shotor Ghār. Cave 1. Central niche and unremoved 'bench' on back wall. (Photo G. Verardi).



d. Shotor Ghār. Cave 1. Corner between back wall and left sidewall. (Photo G. Verardi).



a. Cave at Top-e Āhangarān. (Photo G. Verardi).



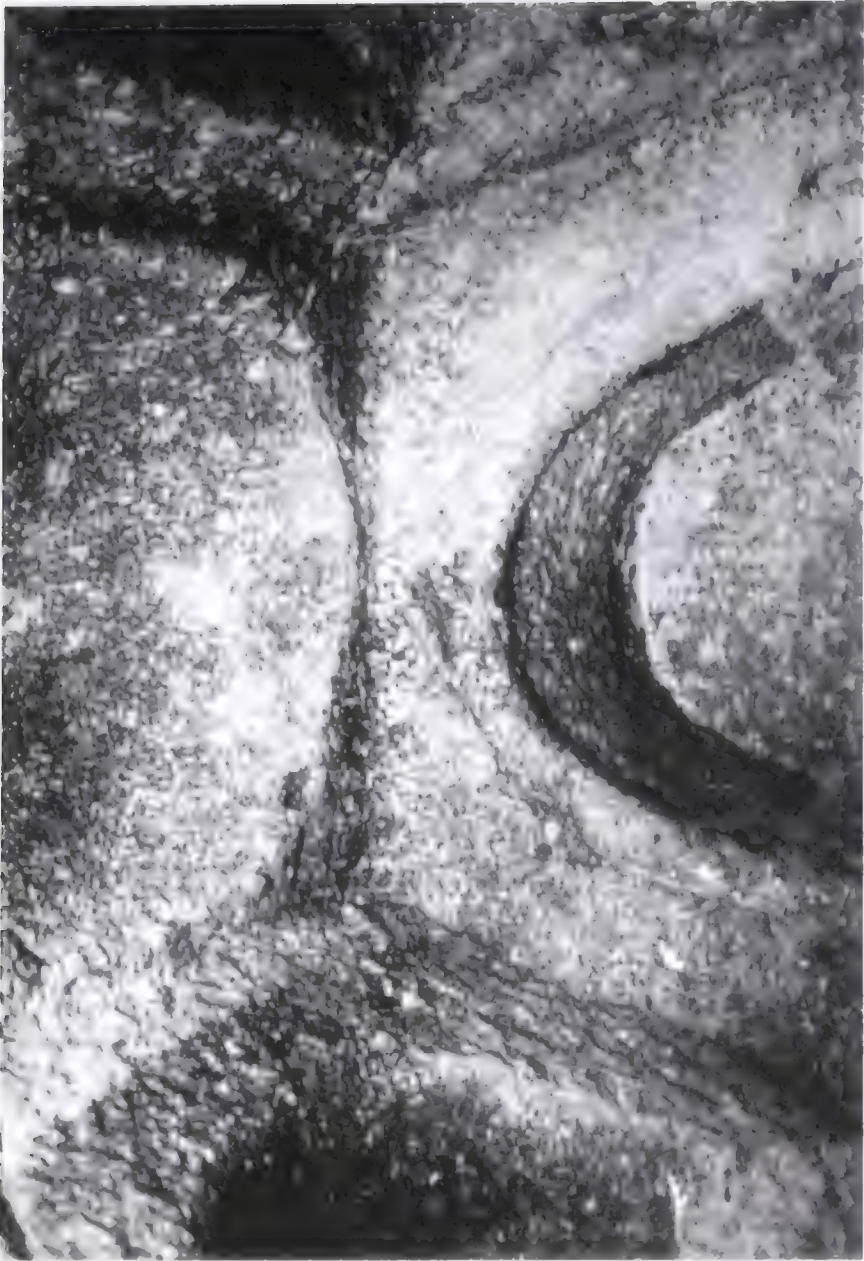
b. Chōka-ye Harchġr. (Photo G. Verardi).



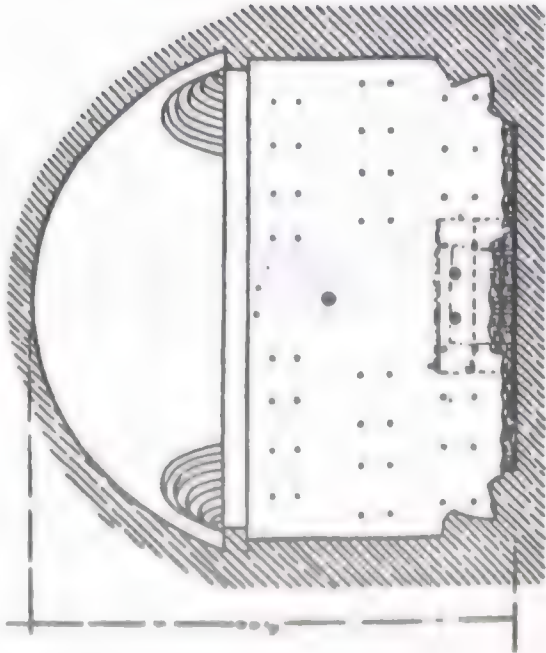
Ghaznī. Aerial photo of the area east of town, RAF flight, 1946. Courtesy Istituto Centrale del Catalogo e della Documentazione - Aerofototeca. Rome.



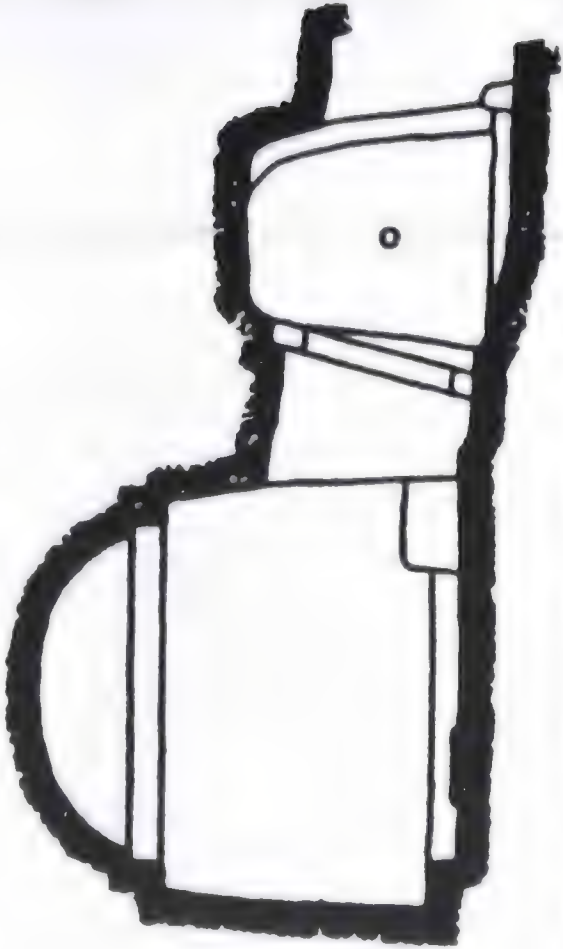
a. Bāmiyān. Cave 12. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 4.4).



b. Bāmiyān. Cave 585. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 136.3).



c. Bāmiyān. Cave 51. From Higuchi (1983-84, III: 22, fig. 11).



d. Bāmiyān. Cave 385. From Higuchi (1983-84, III: 51, fig. 50).



a. Bāmiyān. Cave 200. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 75.2).





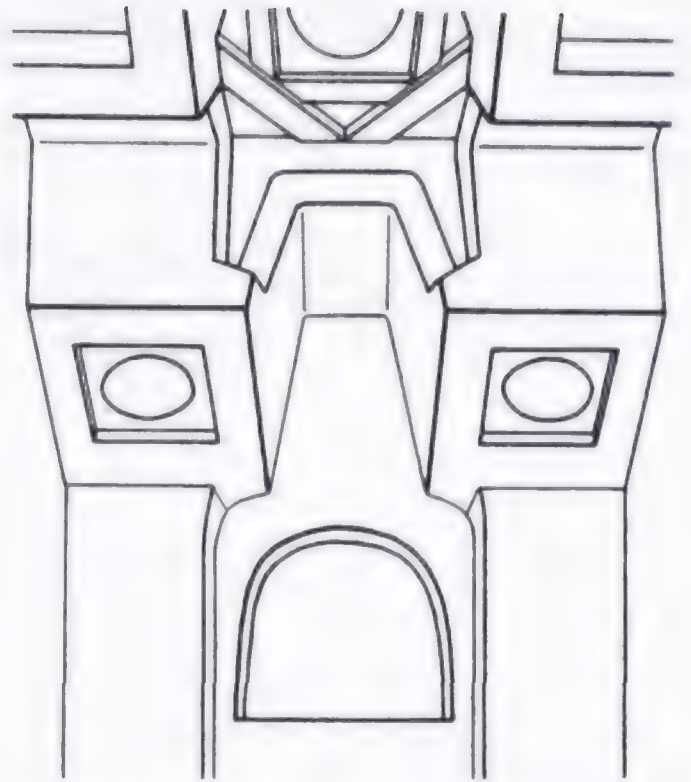
a. Bāmiyān. Cave 330. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 94.1).



b. Bāmiyān. Cave 406. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 109.1).



a. Bāmiyān. Cave 732. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 170.4).



b. Bāmiyān. Cave 140. From Higuchi (1983-84, III: 35, fig. 32).

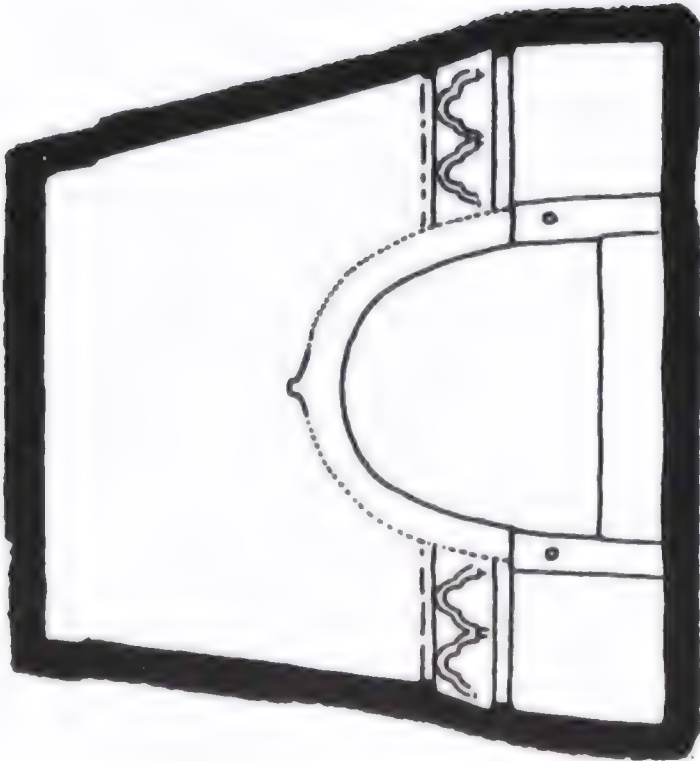




a. Bāmiyān. Cave 305. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 92.1).



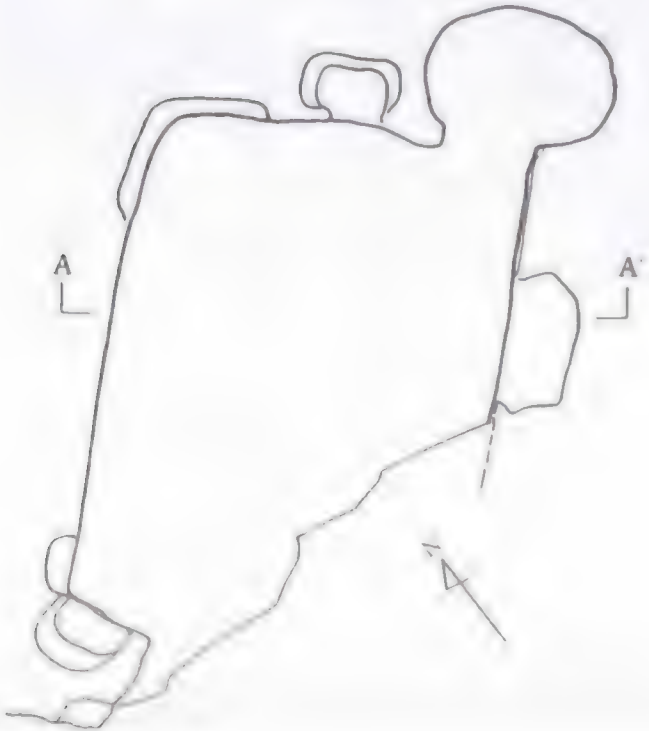
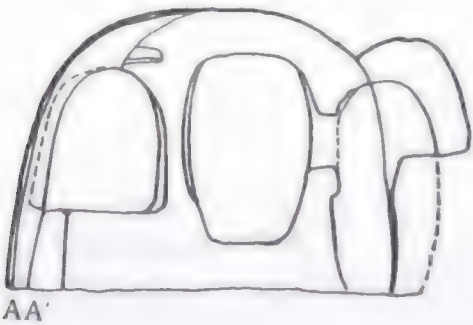
b. Bāmiyān. Stairway to Cave 387. From Higuchi (1983-84, II: pl. 100.3).

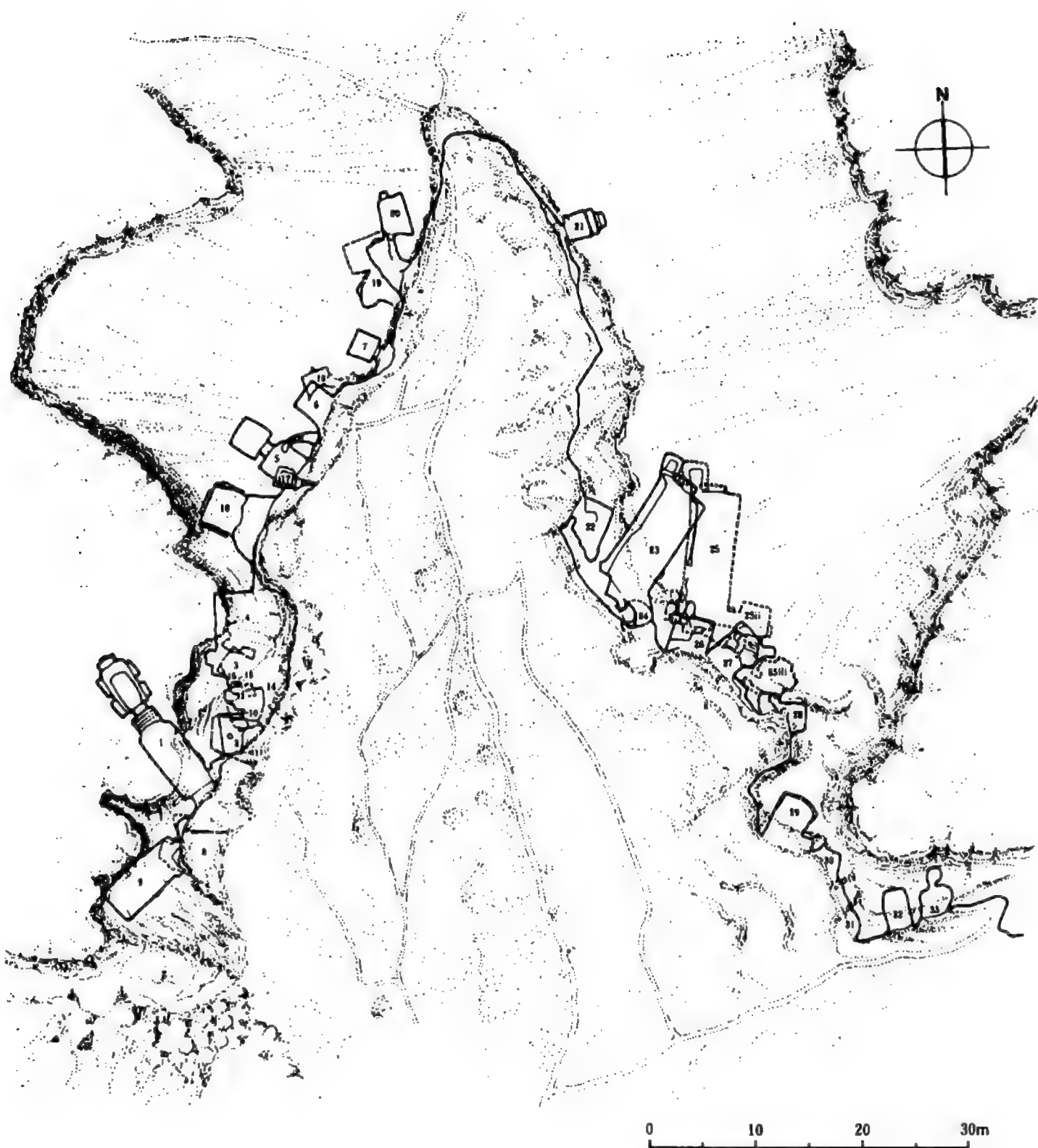


c. Bāmiyān. Cave 738, detail. From Higuchi (1983-84, III: fig. 64).



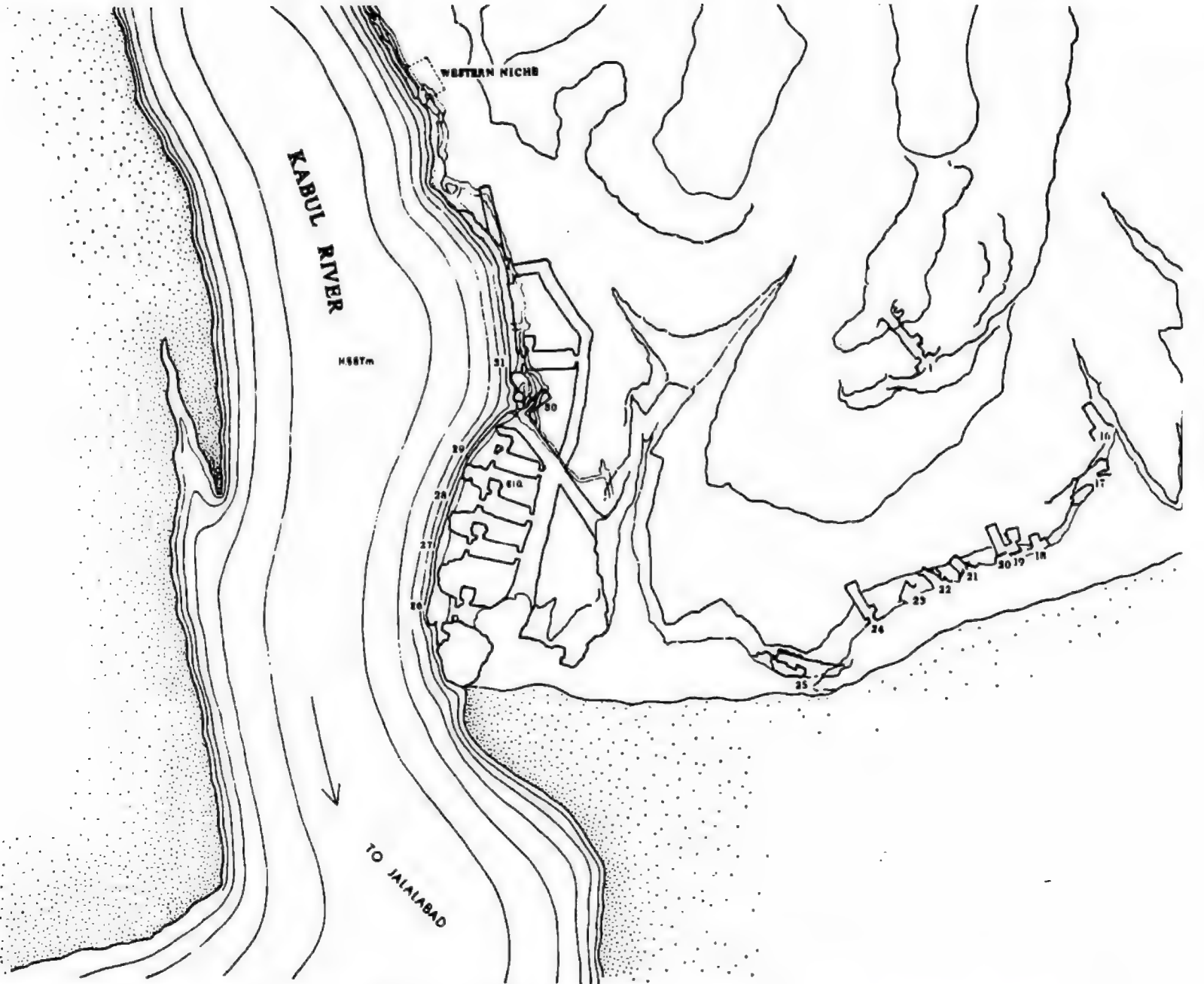
a. Bāmiyān. Cave 164. From Higuchi (1983-84, I: pl. 33.1).





Foladī, general plan. From Higuchi (1983-84, IV: plan 55).





a. Fīl Khāna, western caves. From Mizuno (1967: plan 7, detail).



b. Qafir Kōt (Kharwār). Detail of room in western monastery. (Photo E. Monti).



a. Kara Tepe. Corridor in Complex B. From Staviskij (1975: 35, fig. 14).



b. Kara Tepe. Cave 1 in Complex B. From Staviskij (1972: 23, fig. 8).



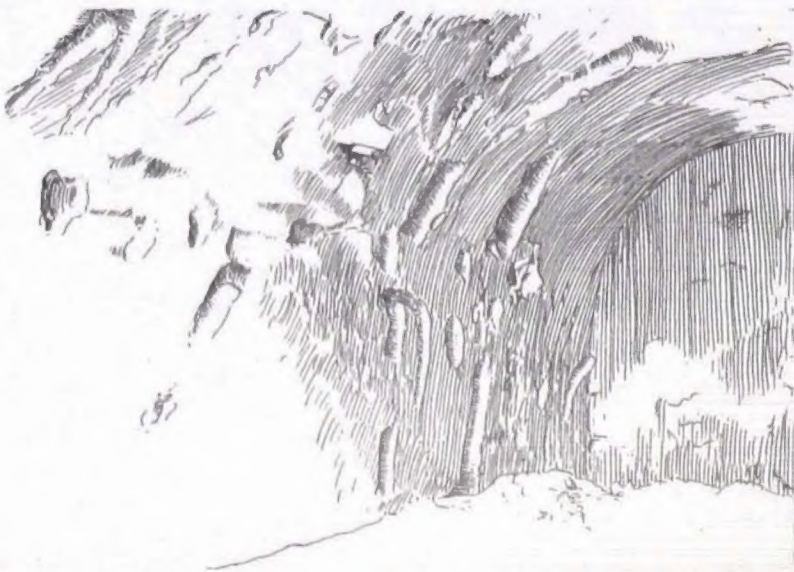
Kara Tepe. Painted decoration in Complex B. From Staviskij (1972: 34, fig. 12).



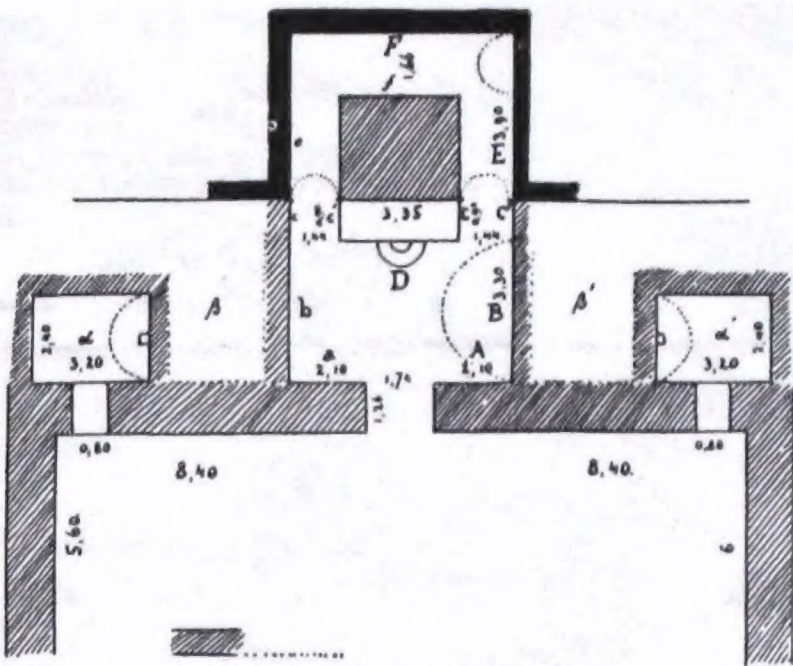
a. Tareli. Detail of Shrine D2, Area D. From Mizuno & Higuchi (1978: pl. 42.2).



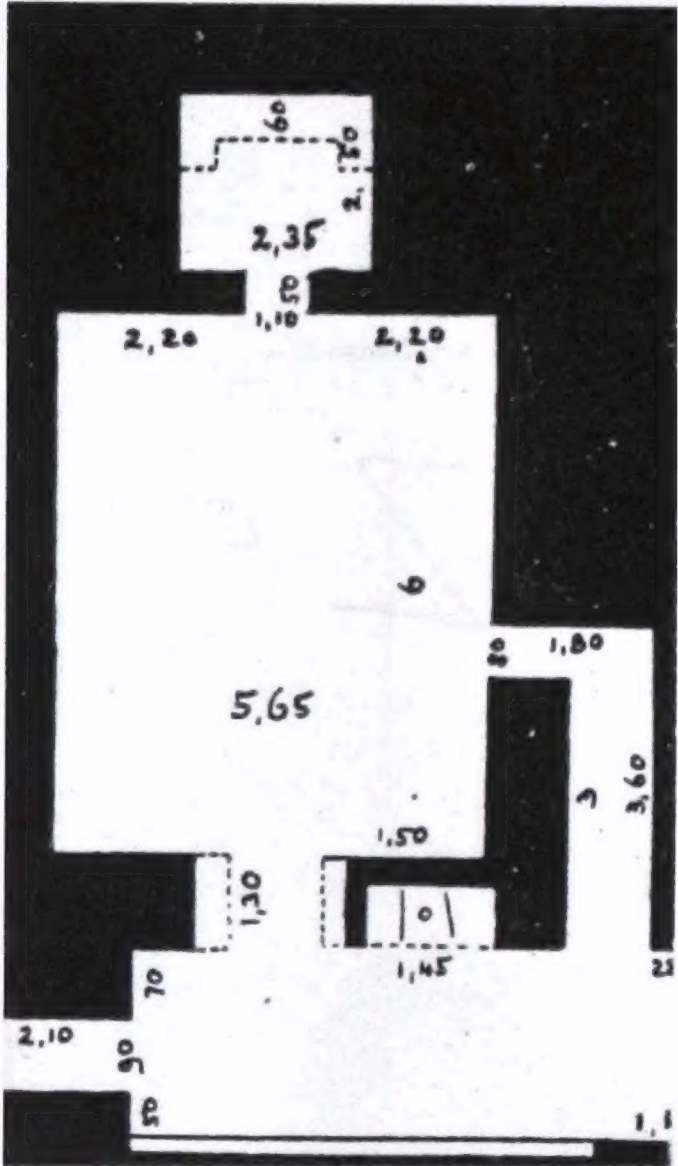
b. Detail of fortress, Sasanian silver plate. From SPA (II: 513, fig. 141).



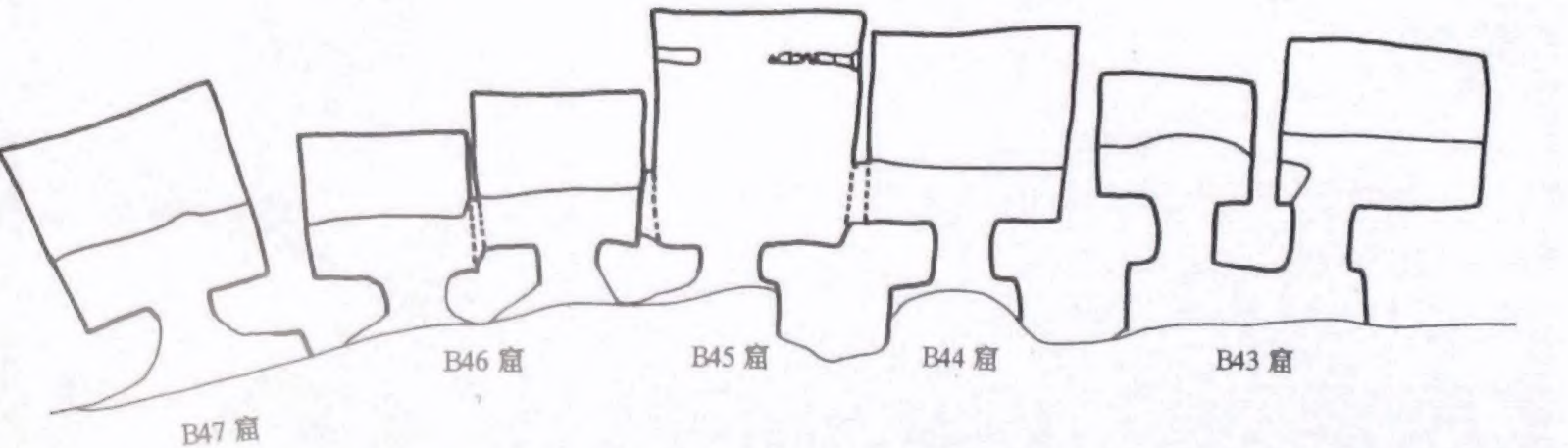
c. Mingoï (Qizil). 'Grosse Höhle'. From Grünwedel (1912: 78, fig. 171).



a. Bāzāklīk. Cave 8. From Grünwedel (1912: 253, fig. 529).



b. Mingoī (Shörchuq). Cave 2. From Grünwedel (1912: 36, fig. 76).



c. Mogao (Dunhuang). Caves B43-47. From Peng Jinzhang & Wang Janjun (2000: fig. 48).



Shikshin (Qarāshāhr). Cave 1. From Ol'denburg (1914: pl. XI).

